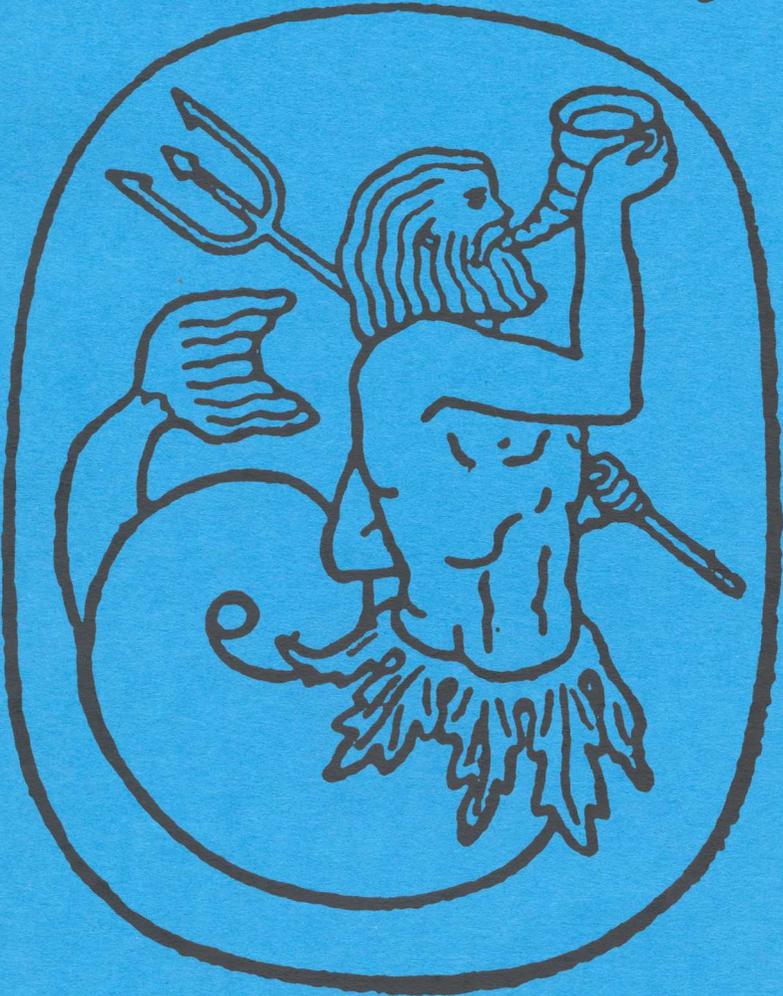


Overheard in Seville

*Bulletin of the
Santayana
Society*

No. 17
Fall 1999



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OVERHEARD IN SEVILLE

ANNOUNCEMENT

SANTAYANA SOCIETY

1999

ANNUAL MEETING

The Society's annual meeting will be held in conjunction with the December meetings of the American Philosophical Association (Eastern Division) in Boston, Massachusetts:

7:30 - 10:30 P.M. 28 December

Nantucket

Boston Marriott Copley Place.

The program and speakers had not yet been determined at the time of publication. When available, details will be posted on the URL

<http://math.uwaterloo.ca/~kerrlaws/Santayana/Bulletin/Meeting.htm>

Santayana's Bifurcationist Theory of Time

The best way to enter deeply into a philosophical system is through its account of the nature of time.¹ This is especially true for Santayana's philosophical system. He will be seen to hold a type of B-Theory of time that recognizes the B-relations of precedence and simultaneity between events as objective but relegates their A-determinations, consisting in their being intrinsically past, present, and future, to the junkheap of mere subjective appearance. This results in a highly bifurcationist philosophy in which the scientific image of a world stripped of all properties that give human life a meaning turns out to be the true one and the manifest or common sense image of the moral agent the false one. It will be shown, furthermore, that the deep parting of the ways between Santayana and his illustrious contemporaries, James, Bergson, Dewey, and Whitehead, all A-Theory process philosophers, is over the issue of bifurcationism, especially in regard to the nature of time. The moral that is to be drawn from my story is that ultimate disagreements between philosophers are due to their rival sentiments of rationality as to what constitutes a rationally satisfying explanation of reality, with these men, in opposition to Santayana, requiring that it be an anthropomorphic or humanistic one.²

To command a proper understanding of Santayana's theory of time it must be seen how it contributes to the ultimate purpose of Santayana's philosophy. This is to show us how to escape from a meaningless, workaday world, of biologically-induced endeavors, which is the standpoint of the moral agent intent on controlling the world, so that we can live within the eternal present, something which we do by intuiting the timeless Platonic essences and by being the spectator of all time and eternity. To achieve this form of platonic and gnostic salvation we must learn to divest ourselves of the moral agent's false, anthropomorphic view of reality, which is foisted on us by our animal nature. As Santayana put it so eloquently, "It would seem idle from her [the workaday] point of view, and rather mad, that any spirit should ever disengage itself from that process and should come to find in it some satisfying essence, so that in discerning and possessing this essence it might transcend that remorseless flux and might look away from it to an eternal world" (RM vii).

Santayana was out of step with the spirit of his age. Whereas the pragmatists, who were in touch with the underlying currents in American society, were red-blooded, up-and-at-em, put-your-shoulder-to-the-wheel, and whistle-while-you-work optimists, who wallowed in the perspective of the moral agent, itching to engage in a Texas "death match" with evil, Santayana was a Schopenhauerian pessimist about man's natural, biologically-based life. It is a grim, meaningless affair that is not to be taken seriously, though it must be endured. But this pessimism was only a transitional moment within Santayana's philosophy, since its ultimate purpose was to free us from our biologically-based proclivity to make reality in our own image anthropomorphically, thereby enabling us to rise up to the highest spiritual levels that

¹ This paper was presented to the Santayana Society in Washington on December 28, 1998.

² I will avail myself of Santayana's previously unpublished manuscripts in John and Shirley Lach's *Physical Order and Moral Liberty*, but only for the purpose of filling in and expanding the published accounts of time, primarily in *Scepticism and Animal Faith* and *The Realms of Being*.

we are capable of, that being to live within the eternal present. Even though we ultimately cannot escape the fate that is foredoomed for us by our animal nature, we can, in our spirit, transcend it. And no one came closer to transcending it by spiritually living in the eternal present than Santayana, who late in life wrote that

I can identify my self heartily with nothing in me except with the flame of spirit itself. Therefore the truest picture of my inmost being would show none of the features of my person, and nothing of the background of my life. It would show only the light of understanding that burned within me and, as far as it could, consumed and purified all the rest. (IW 20)

Our animal nature consigns us desperately to tread water in a raging, hostile sea, which in good time will suck us under to our doom. But as we thrash about madly to stay afloat, a spray is given off that catches the rays of the sun and creates a beautiful rainbow. Although Plato was wrong in his belief that we could grasp hold of this rainbow so as to extricate ourselves from the angry waters, the detached, disinterested contemplation of it constitutes our highest good. This view of man's highest good contrasts sharply with that of a John Dewey, who would be so engrossed in improving the lot of the water treaders through the creation of flotation devices and maybe even, horror of horrors, skidoos, that he would never look up and see the rainbow. Thus, bifurcationism, rather than being the great evil that the pragmatists and other humanistically-inclined philosophers took it to be, is a necessary step along the way to a spiritual type of human salvation.

At the heart of the moral agent's view of reality is what Santayana calls the "sentimental view of time," which takes time to be centered in an ontologically privileged moment of time, the present moment at which the agent acts, in relation to which all other times are either the no-longer or the not-yet, that is, are either past or future. Furthermore, as will be seen, the manner in which the moral agent evaluates things is based on this tensed perspective. Thus, the success of Santayana's bifurcationist quest rests on discrediting the sentimental view of time as a false vision of the way things really are; for it is the emotions, attitudes, and values that it engenders which imprison us in the cave of meaningless worldly endeavors.

Santayana did not just disagree with the sentimental view of time. He scorned it, as is evident from the incredible rhetorical invective that he directed against it. The moral agent, by abrogating a special objective ontological status to the time at which she acts, is said to be "selfish," "egotistical," "impertinent," "stupid," "ignorant," "inept," "biased," "idolatrous," "insane," "outrageous," "fantastic," "poetical," and "superficial" (RM 60-4, 74, 91. POML 65, 75-6, 79, 141-3). Sentimental time also is called a "metaphysical illusion" that is based on "animal blindness" and "animal falsification," being a case of "egregious egotism" (RM 65. RT 83-4). One must excuse Santayana for sounding more like a member of the House of Representatives than a philosopher; for, unless we can free ourselves of the emotions and values that go with the sentimental view of time, we will not succeed in liberating our spirit from the worldly endeavors that prevent it from living in the eternal.

Santayana attacked the sentimental theories of time of Dewey and Bergson, and by implication those of James and Whitehead as well, because they metaphysicalized psychology and thereby committed the sin of anthropomorphizing nature. Consider, first, his charge, in his 1925 review of Dewey's *Experience and Nature*,³ that Dewey

³ "Dewey's Naturalistic Metaphysics," here DNM, *Journal of Philosophy*, 22 (1925) 673-688. Reprinted in *Obiter Scripta*, OS, 213-240. Page references are to the latter.

is guilty of overemphasizing the human foreground to the exclusion of the background. Because Dewey's exclusively future-oriented theory of meaning holds that the whole meaning of an idea is the set of conditionalized predictions of what experiences will be had upon performing certain actions, we cannot even talk about the past, which, following Lovejoy, Santayana calls the paradox of the alleged "futurity of yesterday." (DNM 356). Santayana even went so far as to find in Dewey's exclusively future-oriented emphasis an expression of the prevalent American "absorption in business life," knowing that this would really get Dewey's goat (DNM 224). What really enraged Dewey, however, was Santayana's using this review as his contribution to the 1939 Library of Living Philosophers volume on Dewey, in spite of Dewey having published a response to it in 1927, so it was once reported to me by Sidney Hook. In Dewey's philosophy, "the perspectives of life, avowedly relative, have been treated as absolute, and the dominance of the foreground has been turned from a biological accident into a metaphysical principle" (DNM 238). And this is to commit the cardinal sin of anthropomorphizing nature.

as found in
Dewey and
Bergson.

Santayana's savage attack on Bergson's theory of time is the closest that philosophy can come to a Friar's Roast. Among the "kinder" things he says about Bergson are that "He understands, but he trembles. Non-human immensities frighten him...He suffers from cosmic agrophobia," (WD 62) and "This [*elan vital*] is simply verbal mythology or the hypostasis of words, and there would be some excuse for a rude person who should call it rubbish." (WD 94) And, for good measure, "if those words [the '*elan vital*'] express more than ignorance, they express the love of it" (WD 93). The basis of Santayana's objection is that Bergson illicitly projects features of human psychology onto nature at large. "The psychological illusion that our ideas and purposes are original facts and forces (instead of expressions in consciousness of facts and forces which are material) and the practical and optical illusion that everything wheels about us in this world — these are the primitive persuasions which the enemies of naturalism have always been concerned to project" (WD 73).

We read inevitably in terms of our passions those things which affect them or are analogous to what involves passion in ourselves; and when the mechanism of them is hidden from us ... we suppose that these passions which we find on the surface in ourselves, or read into other creatures, are the substantial and only forces that carry on our part of the world. Penetrating this illusion, dispassionate observers in all ages have received the general impression that nature is one and mechanical. (WD 71.)

Of special interest is what Santayana objects to in Bergson's way of escaping from Zeno's paradoxes. In order to find a solution we must ask "Achilles how he accomplishes the feat" of traversing a spatial interval; but this is to illicitly demand an anthropomorphic account of process and change, as does Whitehead when he asks how the now-moment accomplishes the feat of advancing into the future, as if it were a human runner trying to find the right action-guiding recipe (WD 87). The question is illegitimate because it requires that we understand motion and the passage of time anthropomorphically, which is done through introspecting what goes on in our own consciousness when we intentionally move and then projecting what we discover onto reality at large. Not surprisingly, it is found that our action-guiding recipe is not, and conceptually could not be, that of the physicist's description of a traversal of a distance, since the latter fails to specify an initial and final doing, and thereby fails to satisfy a conceptual requirement for being a recipe.

Santayana
was unafraid
of Zeno.

Santayana, in contrast to Bergson, James, and Whitehead, was not born with an innate fear of Zeno and thus is happy to leave it up to natural science to determine whether motion is mathematically continuous or discrete. "Physical time is occupied by events; and it depends on the character of these whether the number of moments shall be infinite or not" (POML 72). "Whether the continuity of consciousness...might not be composed of an infinity of instants, may be left to the mathematicians, as well as the corresponding question about the continuity of space, motion, and matter" (POML 152). In general, Santayana is content to allow natural science, as opposed to a priori philosophical analysis, to determine the topology and metric of physical time. We leave it "for science to determine gradually in what respects we may attribute the characteristics of sentimental time...to those physical facts or relations," and "the general tendency of science is to...declare that...physical time [is] not at all sentimental" (POML 68. See also 140). This could have been written by Adolf Grunbaum or J. J. C. Smart.

Before considering whether Santayana can make good on this bifurcationist claim, the axiological commitments of the sentimental view of time will be brought out. Santayana claimed that the moral agent's commitment to the sentimental view of time fails to see that "what is important is *important only because it is relative to what requires it*" (POML 79). It is *important* to moral agents that they take some time to be special, in that it alone is intrinsically present, while all other times are either intrinsically past or intrinsically future. The reason is that their intentional efforts to steer the on-going course of events to good denouements *requires* that they have temporal indexical thoughts, such as "Now is the time to act." Such an agent "will project the moral contrast produced by his momentary absorption in action upon the conditions and history of that action, and upon the universe at large." (RM 61) "The sublimity of tragedy comes from projecting sentimental time, with its human centre, upon the canvas of nature" (RM 67).

Let me attempt to add further flesh onto these insightful remarks of Santayana. Imagine that you have just woken up at noon in a hospital room in which there is another patient. A nurse comes in the room and informs you that she **Two examples.** fears that she has mixed up your chart with the other person's. One of you, she says, had a very painful operation one hour ago at 11 a.m. and the other will have a mildly painful one in one hour at 1 p.m. Naturally, you prefer that you are the former, even though it has the consequence that there is overall more pain in your life than on the latter alternative. Notice that your preferences are based upon the tensed perspectives you have *quoad* noon time. However, from a timeless or tenseless perspective, as in the myth of Ur, your preferences would be reversed, preferring from this perspective to be the patient that tenselessly has a mildly painful operation at 1 p.m. rather than the one who tenselessly has the very painful one at 11 a.m.

The explanation for this change in your preferences from the tensed to the tenseless perspective is that "prefers" creates within its scope a nonextensional context and thereby the replacement of one sentence within it with a nonsynonymous one, even if it reports one and the same event, might alter the truth-value of the whole "prefers"-sentence. That tensed and tenseless sentences are not freely substitutable for each other *salva veritate* in this context shows that they express different propositions; for, if proposition *p* is identical with proposition *q*, then one could not have a propositional attitude to *p* that she does not have to *q*.

Another interesting case is the one in which you are asked whether you prefer already to have lived 60 years and have 20 more years left or already to have lived 20 years and have 50 years left. If you are a moral agent, you will prefer the latter, even though it results in an overall shorter life. However, if you view the matter from a tenseless perspective you will prefer the former, since it gives you a life that is longer. Furthermore, from a tensed perspective you prefer that your life is endless in the future direction rather than the past one, but from the tenseless perspective, it makes no difference. Moreover, given that a moral agent's *summum bonum* is to be the right sort of cause of her own full self-realization, it is proper that she regrets that her life is finite in the future direction but not regret in the same way that it is finite in the past direction, for her past finitude does not lessen her opportunity for full self-realization in the way that her future finitude does.

Santayana introduced a distinction between "pictorial" and "physical space" that he took to be analogous to the distinction between "sentimental" and "physical time."

Just as there are temporal indexical perspectives, nows and thens, within sentimental but not within physical time, there are spatial indexical perspectives, heres and theres, within pictorial but not within physical space. "Past and future," he claims, "are like east and west: no place is essentially eastern nor western, but every place not on the same meridian is truly to the east or west of every other."

**Pictorial and
Physical
Space;
Sentimental
and
Physical Time.**

(POML 79) The analogy between sentimental time and pictorial space, however, breaks down with respect to the axiological beliefs of moral agents. For they necessarily recognize axiological asymmetries between the past and future that have no analogue in pictorial space between here and there, in which a spatial analogue to a given temporal sentence is formed by replacing every temporal (or spatial) term in it with a corresponding spatial (or temporal) term, "here" replacing "now" and "to the front of" or "to the rear of" — it makes no difference — replacing "later than." A temporal sentence and its spatial analogue will be said to be disanalogous if they differ in modal status, one of them being necessary, for example, and the other contingent.

Every agency-based axiological temporal asymmetry which is disanalogous to its spatial analogue rests on the conceptual truth that whereas causation cannot go backwards it can go in any spatial direction. Thus, it is a necessary conceptual truth that

T1. An action performed now can bring about something later but not earlier than now.

but not a conceptual truth that

S1. An action performed here can bring about something to the front of but not to the rear of here.

At best, S1 could be contingently true, if I were, for example, literally to have my back to the wall. As a result of this conceptual disanalogy, it follows that whereas it is conceptually true that

T2. An agent can now deliberate about and make choices and have intentions in respect to her conduct later but not earlier than now,

it is not a conceptual truth that

S2. An agent can here deliberate about and make choices and have intentions in respect to her conduct in front of but not to the rear of here.

These conceptually-based disanalogies can be used to make sense of the saying that all's well that ends well, the spatial analogue of which is just plain silly, that all's

well that terminates well in front of here. This conceptual disanalogy can be spelled out as

T3. A moral agent holds that if it is better to be in state Y than state X, then it is better to be in state X now and state Y later rather than earlier than now, provided that the agent freely brings Y about out of X.

S3. A moral agent holds that if it is better to be in state Y than state X, then it is better to be in state X here and state Y to the front rather than to the rear of here, provided that the agent freely brings Y about out of X.

The soul-building theodicy is based on the axiological intuition expressed by T3.

It might be objected that the three preceding conceptual disanalogies could be expressed equally well in a tenseless manner that makes no use of "now" but only the B-relations of "earlier and later than." All that T1 and T2 establish is that causation works asymmetrically with respect to the earlier and later direction of time. And the axiological intuition that is expressed by T3 could be captured equally well by the tenseless proposition

T3'. A moral agent holds that if it is better to be in state Y than state X, then it is better to be in state Y later rather than earlier state X, provided that the agent freely brings Y about out of X.

This objection fails to realize that T3 is a necessary conceptual truth only when restricted to the viewpoint of a moral agent. But the viewpoint of moral agents, given that they are animals whose biological constitution determines them to be always on the make, is that of sentimental time, with its unique now-moment of action. Thus, T3', the tenseless version of T3, requires that the moral agents to which it is restricted view time sentimentally.

Should it turn out that the sentimental view of time is false, because the moral agent's tensed perspectives are subjective or illusory, it will have the bifurcationist upshot that the natural world is not a suitable arena for living the morally strenuous life; for it does not have any of the value- and importance-bestowing properties that the moral agent imputes to it. If sentimental time is false, bifurcationism follows.

How this will sit with a moral agent will depend upon the psychological makeup of the individual moral agent. It might not be bad news for a world-weary, Santayana-type pessimist, who could write that

what is called experience, the obvious and inescapable pressure of sensation, is intrinsically a dream, something arbitrary, fugitive, unsubstantial, coming out of nothing and ending in nothing. Yet since this dream is endured, and to some extent may be surveyed and remembered, there is something else on the hither side of it which I call the spirit; a witness, but not an agent, since spirit can neither bring the dream about nor avoid it nor understand why it should come (TW 8).

But such a bifurcationistic upshot would be devastating to a William James, whose opposed sentiment of rationality held that "Nothing could be more absurd than to hope for the definitive triumph of any philosophy which should refuse to legitimate...the more powerful of our emotional and practical tendencies."⁴ The worst defect in a philosophy is to not give the moral agent any

... object whatever to press against. A philosophy whose principle is so incommensurate with our most intimate powers as to deny them all relevancy in universal affairs, as to annihilate their motives at one blow, will be even more unpopular than pessimism. ... This is why materialism will always fail of universal adoption. ... For materialism denies reality to the objects of

⁴ William James, *Principles of Psychology*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981) 943. Cited as "James."

almost all the impulses which we most cherish. ... We demand in it [the universe] a *character* for which our emotions and active propensities shall be a match. (James 940-1)

Some of the Santayana commentators have made too little of the incentive-destroying consequences, at least for those of a Jamesian sentiment of rationality, of Santayana's radical bifurcationism. John Lachs, in his wonderfully concise and readable book on Santayana, puts far too happy a face on Santayana's bifurcationism, which he very succinctly puts as the doctrine that "science has no need of, and leaves no room for, the feelings, moods, purposes, perspectives, and mistakes that are the staple of private experience."⁵ This is the bad news, but then he goes on to give us the good news that "this leaves religion, art, and subjective experience paramount in their own sphere: they are the highlights in the life of mind" (Lachs 143). Lach's requirement on the opening page of his book that philosophy "make an impact upon what manner of persons we are and how we live" certainly is satisfied by Santayana's bifurcationist philosophy but in a manner that is quite undesirable, at least in the case of those of a Jamesian persuasion. By the way, reading Lach's book did make a significant impact in how I live: I no longer walk the streets of downtown Nashville after dark for fear that I'll run into his menacing stranger.

Given the great significance, for good or ill, of Santayana's bifurcationism between the sentimental time of the moral agent and the physical time of the scientist, which alone is objective according to Santayana, we are justified in demanding that he has some good argument for this bifurcationist thesis. Fortunately, a battery of arguments can be found in his writings that support his denial that events have A-determinations intrinsically or absolutely, which, when put in Carnap's formal mode, means that "___ is present (past, future)" is not the monadic predicate it grammatically appears to be but rather unfolds into the dyadic predicate "___ is present (past, future) at ___," in which a date or event expression is to be substituted for the final blank space. I can detect five potential arguments in his text and will now critically evaluate each in turn. I might be guilty of finding arguments in the text that are not there but I would prefer to do this than miss some argument that is there.

Santayana says that "Not much reflection is required to prove that sentimental time ... is an animal illusion. Every season of life, every age of history, every day of the year thinks itself alone alive and alone basking in the noon of reality. ... Existence seems to be existence 'now'" (POML 64 and RM 64). This suggests a picture of a succession of different persons each of whom says, as he looks at his clock, that some particular time is present. We envision Plato saying "It is now 425 B.C." (He was prophetic.), Kant later saying "It is 1770 A.D., and finally someone now saying that "It is now 1998." For our contemporary to insist that her time is ontologically privileged — that there is no time like the present — would be analogous to her saying that there is no place like here. Imagine in this connection the analogous case of a row of soldiers each of whom insists that she alone occupies here. Since the latter is an unwarranted piece of egotistical chauvinism, so is the former.

Again, we see Santayana assuming that sentimental time is analogous to sentimental space, something that we already have found to be dubious. In this case the analogy fails because whereas tensed perspectives are shared by different *relevant*

**Five of
Santayana's
arguments
to deny an
A-Theory:**

**the anti-
chauvinist
argument;**

⁵ John Lachs, *George Santayana* (Boston: Twayne, 1988). p. 142. Cited as "Lachs."

observers, spatial indexical perspectives are not, thereby showing that the former are objective in a way that the latter are not. Because it is a necessary truth that

S4. Two observers who exist now at different place can both see what happens here now,

but false, and necessarily false that

T4. Two observers who exist here at different times can both see what happens now here.⁶

it follows that our here-there perspective is perceptually transcendable in a way in which our past-present-future one is not. Whereas only observers who exist now can directly verify or see what occurs now, observers who do not exist here can directly verify or see what occurs here. Thus, while it is necessarily true that

T5. Observers who can directly verify (see) what occurs now share the same temporal indexical perspective, i.e. they both exist now,

it is not necessarily true that

S5. Observers who can directly verify (see) what occurs here share the same spatial indexical perspective, i.e. they both exist here.

Often observers who do not occupy here can have a better view of what is going on here than do those who are here.

Thus, our agreement in judgment or unanimity test for objectivity shows a conceptual disanalogy between now and here in regard to their being shared by or common to the *relevant* observers. The relevant observers for directly verifying or seeing what occurs now must share the same temporal perspective but not the same spatial indexical perspective; they must all exist now but needn't all exist here. This is why it seemed less chauvinistic to say that there is no time like the present than there is no place like here. Even if, *per impossible*, we could converse with Plato via some mysterious telephone connection, his testimony as to what he then perceives would be irrelevant for the purpose of determining what is happening now. Our unanimity test, therefore, presupposes a shared or common now among the relevant observers but not a common here. And, given that one mark of the objective is to be shared or common, it follows that our temporal indexical perspectives are objective in a way in which our spatial indexical perspectives are not.

Santayana has another argument for the subjectivity of sentimental time, this one based on the selectivity of its tensed perspectives. "In nature there is no foreground the or background, no here, no now, no moral cathedra, no centre so really selectivity central as to reduce all other things to mere margins and mere argument; perspectives. A foreground is by definition to some *chosen* point of view ... " (DNM 223. My italics). Now and here are said to be "animal categories imposed on the field of action by action itself and impossible except in a perspective created by living intently in the act of looking, moving, or reaching out from an occupied centre" (RM 52. My italics). Kerr-Lawson, in his exposition of this doctrine, speaks of "one moment being enacted by the self" in sentimental time, which thereby creates a now-based temporal perspective.⁷

This account of tensed temporal perspectives being created by the intentional concentration of conscious attention upon some moment of the physical time of the

⁶ I am adopting the convention that an observer's use of "now" refers to the simultaneity class of events that are causally connectible with the observer by a rectilinear light ray.

⁷ See 311-2 of A. Kerr-Lawson, "Natural Moments in Santayana's Philosophy of Nature," *Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society*, Fall, 1980, Vol. XVI, No. 4. My italics.

objective world is reminiscent of Bertrand Russell's claim in his 1918-9 "Philosophy of Logical Atomism Lectures," which no doubt influenced Santayana, that

it is extremely difficult, if you get rid of consciousness altogether, to explain what you mean by such a word as 'this', what it is that makes the absence of impartiality. You would say that in a purely physical there would be complete impartiality. All parts of time and all regions of space would seem equally emphatic. But what really happens is that we *pick out* certain facts, past and future and all that sort of thing; they all radiate out from 'this'.⁸

That our use of "now" or "this time" is selective has been endorsed in more recent years by A. J. Ayer when he said that "events are not in themselves either past, present, or future. In themselves they stand in relations of temporal precedence which do not vary with time. ... What varies is only the point of reference which is *taken* to constitute the present."⁹ (PK 152-3. My italics).

If Santayana, Russell, and Ayer are right in their contention that a speaker can choose or select what time or event qualifies as being present or now, then there is indeed something subjective about the manner in which events acquire their A-determinations. But it can be shown that our temporal indexical perspectives, unlike our spatial indexical perspectives, are not selective. We feel that we are prisoners of time but not of space in the sense that we are free to move about in space but are not analogously temporally free and rangy, thus the reason for it making sense to say "Come here" but not "Come now," assuming it is only the locomotive sense that is intended.

To begin with, there is this conceptual disanalogy:

S6. I can choose here and now whether my use of "here" later than now denotes a place in front of or to the rear of here.

T6. I can choose now and here whether my use of "now" in front of here denotes a time later or earlier than now.

Because causation cannot go from present to past but can go from here in any spatial direction there are the following two conceptual disanalogies between now and here.

S7. I can choose here and now whether to occupy here later than now.

T7. I can choose now and here whether to occupy now in front of here.

And

S8. I can choose here and now to occupy here at all times between now and five minutes later than now.

T8. I can choose now and here to occupy now at all places between here and five feet in front of here.

The selectivity and locomotive conceptual disanalogies between spatial and temporal indexical perspectives give an ontological grounding to a moral agent's axiological biases in favor of the future, for which there is no analogous axiological preference in favor of any one direction from here. They speak for the objectivity of sentimental time, as opposed to pictorial space. There is a passage in Santayana that seems to accept Dewey's principle of continuity and that has this very anti-bifurcationist upshot.

It may be a human prejudice, but it seems to us, at least, that nothing is more natural than to care which way things go, and to weight the mechanism of life with preference. Without it existence would seem to us ghostly, and necessity trivial. Yet without consciousness the world would be a mathematical limbo ... nobody would care to live or to be beautiful ... the moral life of the world is late, local, ephemeral; *but it is a natural expression of the world, and at a*

⁸ Bertrand Russell, "Philosophy of Logical Atomism," *Monist* 1918-9, Lecture IV, 55-6, My italics.

⁹ Alfred J. Ayer, *The Problem of Knowledge* (London: Macmillan, 1956) 152-3. My italics.

greater or less remove, an expression of the whole world; for the whole world has made just this sort of moral life possible and inevitable. (POML 157. My italics)

This argument tries to establish that sentimental time is subjective in the sense of being psychological through a genetic account of how it is that an animal comes to take some time to be present. The animal who is a moral agent acquires her sentimental vista of time because

the argument from genetic psychology;

she is a fighter within the flux of history, rather than a passive spectator.

Her capacity to observe is only a by-product of her eagerness to elude and to pursue a certain circle of objects. These objects are chiefly those that are near, recent, or threatening, or magnetic. Specious time is therefore qualified by temporal perspectives wholly absent in natural time; earlier things are therein called past, later things future. ... This is sentimental time: the aerial perspective of the moral world, by which, from every particular station, a fog of ignorance is felt to cover the distance, a round horizon is drawn at the radius of one's emotional tether, and a total difference of nature is attributed to what happens to lie before and to what happens to lie behind, at every point traversed in succession in the endless journey of the spirit. (POML 75)

From these facts of genetic psychology, Santayana infers that "Present is what goes on now, for me, here," and thereby is subject-dependent (POML 142). This inference is very dubious, since it draws semantic and metaphysical consequences from a genetic psychological analysis, which is the very thing that Santayana found so objectionable in James's philosophy. Because a moral agent is biologically determined to believe that some time is present simpliciter or intrinsically, namely the one at which she acts, it does not follow that when she says that some time or event is present she means that this time or event is simultaneous with her conscious act of attending to it. For her, there is no contradiction in saying that some time or event is now present simpliciter even though it is not the object of an attentive act.

The bivalence argument goes as follows:

1. Necessarily, the law of bivalence is true — every proposition, without exception, is either true or false;
2. It is not possible that both the law of bivalence is true and events are intrinsically or monadically past, present, or future; therefore,
3. It is impossible that events are intrinsically past, present, or future.

Santayana's grounds for premise 2 is found in his claim that when we say that Caesar is dead we "slide...to a private perspective, and from a private perspective to a dramatic equivocation. For that Caesar lived *long ago* is true only in relation to our own times; and that he is dead, long dead, is not true of him at all, if we mean his life or his consciousness, but at most might be true of his corpse, if that still existed. But words lead us to imagine that things can survive themselves" (RT 84). This seems to be based on a questionable version of the principle of "actualism," which the A-theorist C. D. Broad seemed to accept at one time, according to which an object or event cannot now have a property unless it exists or happens now. Thus, Caesar and Caesar's death cannot now have the properties, respectively, of being dead or being past unless they, respectively, exist or happen now. One has only to clearly formulate this principle in order to refute the argument based on it. Notice that, for this principle, it is not Caesar but only his corpse that now has the property of being dead. But since Caesar is not identical with his body, no less his dead body, it is not true that Caesar is now dead!

There are numerous passages in which Santayana argues that A-determinations are reducible to or eliminable in favor of B-relations, meaning that an A-proposition

— a proposition that reports an event as past, present, or future through the use of a nonfreely repeatable sentence in that successive tokenings of it could express propositions that differ in truth-value — can be translated into a B-proposition — a proposition that reports a B-relation of precedence or simultaneity between two events through the use of a freely repeatable sentence. Through such a reductive or elimination analysis, sentimental time is shown not to be an objective feature of the objective world. Santayana gives a B-reduction in the following passage.

and the
B-reduction
argument.

If Julius Caesar was alive at a certain date he was or would be or had been alive. These three assertions, in their *deliverance*, are identical; and in order to be identical in their *deliverance*, they have to be different in form, because the report is made in each case from a different point in time, so that the temporal perspectives of the same fact, Caesar's death on the Ides of March, require different tenses of the verb. This is a proof of instability in knowledge in contrast to the fixity of truth (RT 83. My italics).

I assume that by *deliverance* Santayana means the propositional content of the successive tokenings of the three differently temporally indexed counterpart sentences, with the consequence that these utterances express one and the same proposition, namely that Caesar dies tenselessly on the Ides of March.

This B-reduction is central to Santayana's theory of time. There can be no doubt that McTaggart's 1908 argument for the unreality of time, based on each event in the A-series having the incompatible properties of being past, present, and future, haunts Santayana's discussion. For he explicitly employs his B-reduction as supplying a way out of this alleged contradiction by showing that these apparently incompatible A-determinations of an event can be analyzed in terms of this event tenselessly standing in different B-relations to different events in history. "If the [tensed] views, being views, must be taken from some arbitrary point, they may be exchanged for one another, thus annulling the bias of each, in so far as the others contradict it" (RM 64. My italics). "*Contradictory* epithets of this sort [A-determinations] are compatible when they are seen to be relative" (RM 73. My italics). Santayana probably thought that the only way out of McTaggart's argument is to show that A-determinations are not intrinsic to events. This is a consequence of his perverse theory of actuality, which requires that an event occur at any time at which it has a property. Thus, if a present event were intrinsically past, for example, it would have to be both present and past now!

Santayana
surely had
in mind the
McTaggart
argument.

Another job that the B-reduction does for Santayana is to satisfy his gnostic quest to be the knower of all time and eternity. To have such eternal knowledge of history requires that the propositions known be of the freely repeatable sort. "Though it is impossible for us to live our lives all at once, we may cultivate a sense of its totality, and of the totality of the truth of things. In that measure we shall have lived, as it were, in the presence of God, and in as full harmony with his vision and will as our human nature allows" (rw 18-9).

But the most important job that the B-reduction does within Santayana's philosophical system is that it buttresses his relational theory of time, according to which events are not in time but time is in events. Since all temporal facts are facts about B-relations, it is incumbent on the relational theory to give a B-reduction of A-propositions. The reason is that an A-proposition makes an apparent reference to a time as such through its use of a temporal indexical term, such as *now*, *this time*, or *the present*. The relational theory must show that this apparent reference to a time is reducible to B-relations between events.

Santayana's version of the relational theory denies that time is absolute in the sense of being a substantial entity that exists separately and independently of everything else. He does so because of his acceptance of Leibniz's principle of the identity of indiscernibles. Since "each of its [absolute time's] moments would be exactly like every other...they would collapse into identity" (RM 78). "In nature succession is dependent on derivation and mediated by matter. (RM 60) "Physical time is "an order of derivation integral to the flux of matter" (RM 61).

Thus, time, as it is in itself, is nothing but the B-series of events that runs from earlier to later. The direction of this series is determined by irreversible causal processes. There is an "irreversible polarity within every natural moment, which indicates and transmits the irreversible direction of genesis" (RM 95). Santayana stresses that the B-relations between events are purely external. Every event belongs somewhere in the B-series "by virtue of the external relations which pin it there" (RM 84). Every event is "cut off from everything else; the rest becomes, and must for ever remain, external to it" (RM 62). The reason that James, unlike Santayana, was in fear of Zeno is that James thought that events could stand in immediate temporal relations only if they were not external to each other. They had to get inside each other, mush together. Again, we see a radical clash in the sentiments of rationality of James, along with the other process philosophers, and Santayana.

There is an ontological "democratic equality" between the externally related events in the B-series (DNM 238). Each tenselessly instantiates the essence of presentness, which means only that it enjoys actuality or existence at the time at which it happens. "Presentness is a character intrinsic to all existence" (RM 61). It "is a name for [an event's] existence and inalienable actuality" (RM 79). Santayana is very careful to distinguish between "presentness," as a name for the essence of being actual, and "the present," as an indexical expression that denotes a specific moment of time, called a *fact* by Santayana. He warns us that we must not confuse "the intuitive *now*, which is an essence...with the particular *nows*, which are facts" (RT 85). Thus, when Santayana speaks about the "moving present," as he does in several places (RM 66. RT 85. POML 64, 78), he does not mean that the denotatum of the indexical use of "now," which is a particular moment, advances to ever later times. This would entail the absurdity that the denotatum of "now" — this very moment of time, the present — will become some other moment of time and thus cease to be identical with itself! Santayana's claim that "The essence of *nowness* runs like the fire along the fuse of time, but the particular spark is different at each point," therefore, is not an objectionable type of a river of time metaphor, in which there is some mysterious entity transcendent to the B-series that "moves" along it to ever later positions.¹⁰ Thus, it was quite unfair for Donald Williams, whose own B-theory of time in his essay, "The Myth of Passage," is virtually identical with the position Santayana had worked out many years earlier, to have lumped Santayana together with those A-theorists who thought of temporal becoming in this objectionable sense. All that Santayana meant by the metaphor of

¹⁰ Furthermore, as Santayana himself point out, if there were an entity transcendent to the B-series of events that successively lit them up one after the other, it would generate a higher order B-series made up of the events of this entity lighting up the events of the first-order B-series. "All the questions concerning change, time, and existence would recur in respect to this [succession of lighting-ups] ... and its temporal order." (RM 75)

the fire moving along the fuse of time is that the essence of being present or actual is successively exemplified by different events.

We have seen the crucial role that Santayana's B-reduction plays in supplying a solution to McTaggart's paradox, satisfying his gnostic quest for knowing eternal truths about the temporal flux, supporting his relational theory of time, and escaping from having to countenance an objectionable version of temporal becoming. Unfortunately, the B-reduction does not work; for it is obvious that no B-proposition is identical with any A-proposition, since it is possible for one to have a propositional attitude to the former that is not had to latter. For example one could believe that event E is occurring now without believing that event E tenselessly occurs at a certain date (or tenselessly occurs so many year later than another event). Santayana would not be very impressed by this way of refuting his B-reduction. For he could point out that its appeal to our common sense ways of thinking and talking, in effect, permits the common sense sentimental view of time to be judge and jury in its own case. A similar charge of vicious circularity could be leveled against my earlier attempt to show that the tensed perspectives of sentimental time, pace Santayana, are objective by appeal to the selectivity and locomotive conceptual disanalogies; for these disanalogies are based on our common sense sentimental view of time, which again results in sentimental time being the judge and jury in its own case.

Santayana's case against sentimental time being objective ultimately seems to be based on an implicit scientific premise — that science is the ultimate arbiter of what exists and what does not exist. And, thus, since science does not make use of the sentimental view of time, there are no irreducible tensed perspectives in the objective world. This argument can be used to show the subjectivity of secondary and tertiary properties. How is this dispute between the common sense and scientific views of time to be mediated? I'm not sure what to say. Maybe it all gets down to one's personal sentiment of rationality. If so, Santayana, to be consistent must say about his own scientific view of time what he said about Dewey's sentimental view of time — that every individual and society "has a right to treat the world as its field of action, and to recast the human mind, as far as possible, so as to adapt it exclusively to that public function" (DNM 239). His own view is just as much a result of his own personal proclivities as is Dewey's. Both are myths, in his sense, by which people try to find some meaning and value in their lives.

**Santayana
has a
scientific
premise,
with no
absolute
justification**

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Sentimental Time and The Sense of Rationality

Physical time, according to George Santayana, is *constituted* by matter; it has none of the status of an independent substance. The substance of the cosmos consists of dispersed events he calls "natural moments," each of which has "forward tension" and "lateral tensions." These have a marked impulsive nature, always asserting themselves in a forward direction; in the case of living organisms, a focus on the present and the immediate future is undeniable. Such a self-directed focus is inevitable and healthy for that animal life. But subjectivist modern philosophy has incorrectly taken such a focus to be the true account of things, sometimes tying this view to a transcendental idealism or to one of its more recent mutants; in their extreme forms, such philosophies are antithetic to the intelligent regulation of life due to the distortions of an egotism.¹

Richard Gale brings an obvious expertise and subtlety to the discussion of time. In the case of Santayana's doctrine, he correctly assigns it the image of science, and brings out clearly Santayana's hostility to any anthropomorphic account, such as is found in the four eminent contemporaries he mentions. Gale relies heavily on McTaggart's well-known A- and B-Theories of time, which he takes as descriptive of Santayana's sentimental and physical time. He offers refutations of various arguments he finds in the text that the sentimental view of time must give place to that of physical time; he speaks with approval of a Jamesian sense of rationality; and he argues that Santayana's view of time is destructive of moral agency. I shall question each of these three claims in turn, and press somewhat different propositions.

On several occasions, Gale assumes that Santayana is appealing to standard modes of argumentation, such as reduction; but I hold that the arguments are quite different. I argue that the sustained attacks which Santayana directs at the notion of sentimental time do not constitute the chief determinants of his account of physical time. They are better seen as criticisms of sentimental time from the perspective of an already adopted doctrine. An alternative, top-down justification of his view of time is suggested. Thus my criticism is directed less at Gale's reading of the substance of Santayana's views than at his account of the methodology by which it is obtained. On rationality — or the sense of rationality, as James puts it — Santayana's position reflects his reliance on an absolute realm of eternal truth; our view of what is rational must rest on our best perception of the truth. Those who rely instead on what they would like to be true can anticipate misfortune and calamity. While this is an obvious point, he feels that absence of a firm doctrine of truth in a philosophy encourages such a failing. Santayana's account of truth is moreover closely tied to and surely influences his understanding of time. Again, of importance to Gale are the moral question and its relation to the theory of time. He takes the A-Theory to be an essential part of a Jamesian moral agency, and Santayana's B-Theory to lead to his later doctrines characterised by detachment from worldly concerns. I argue that Gale too much stresses both the extent of Santayana's detachment, and the

¹ An earlier version of this paper was read to the annual meeting of the Santayana Society in Washington, D. C. on December 28, 1998, in response to the above paper by Richard Gale

determining role in it of a B-Theory of time. In my reading, Santayana's treatment of time is sufficiently rich and flexible to permit a full range of moral positions.

Santayana discusses two very different accounts of time, the mathematical and the sentimental. However, his text is dominated by a third sense of the word 'time'. This is real time, time in itself, time as distinct from human representations of time. The empiricist will find such a notion unclear and call it metaphysical — for it extends beyond immediate intuition and exact definition into the unknown. It is better, however, not to think of it as a notion at all, but quite simply as time itself, with whatever properties it happens to have. We might say that with the term 'physical time' he is employing direct reference, as described (but not used) in today's philosophy of language. All knowledge of the cosmos must make a leap into the obscure realm of matter; the time found there is not metaphysical, despite its remoteness, and he calls it physical time, openly challenging transcendentalist terminology. Reference to a physical time which stands apart from any and all descriptions of it is not commonly found in analyses of scientific knowledge, which take as their three essential components theories, experimental data, and confirmation procedures. But I think that few scientists dismiss from their thoughts something different from all of these — a latent, brooding, omnipresent physical time. One might in this sense say that Santayana has a scientific imagination, although of course is lacking in scientific expertise.

Here is the bifurcation that Gale finds so prominent in Santayana. Here are juxtaposed physical time in the realm of matter, with an account of it in the realm of essence. In Gale's apt term 'scientific image', the word 'scientific' is always in the forefront. is appropriate for Santayana (although many would find this strange). But the word 'image' might suggest that he had in mind some scientific account of time, perhaps mathematical time, and is proving that sentimental time must give place to it. In Gale's reconstruction, the sentimental theory vies with a B-Theory, where Santayana mistakenly argues that the former is false and the latter true. But the bifurcation which is so prominent is lost in this analysis. A description of Santayana's reasoning must keep in the forefront physical time from the realm of matter; in opposition to this are various essences serving as candidates for representations of it, or as he calls them, "names" of physical time. His concern is the question how well the mathematical and the sentimental accounts serve to depict this real time, but also what perils there might be if we were to mistake these or any other essences for a literally true account of the time of the real world. Thus we try to correct these accounts, in light of our encounter with that physical time. For instance, mathematical time is remote and fussy; although amazing scientific results are achieved in virtue of its precision, this hardly gives us an indication of real time in regard to the very large and the very small, for which there are no data to work with. The shortcomings of sentimental time is the theme we are dealing with here.

It might seem that Santayana is dodging the philosophical requirement that he offer justifications for his categories and principles. In his arguments, the realms of being often seem to be his only reasons — ready-made and unjustified — for taking one position in place of another. However, one cannot fairly say that he fails to justify this ontology, having given it the most intense scrutiny in *Scepticism and Animal Faith*. The difference with him is that, once he has his ontology, he no longer seeks its vindication as he goes along, but uses it instead to justify elaborations on his thought and his refutations of other positions. In SAF, his once-only full treatment of

epistemology, he shows that partial scepticisms are haphazard and personal things, because transcendental principles when fully applied lead to a sweeping scepticism. There can be no genuine discussion of knowledge without making hypotheses, he concludes, and his own ontology seeks to describe the categories intrinsic to our experience candidly with as few assumptions as possible. He accepts a realm of substances, as justified by animal faith; and at the beginning of *RM*, he argues that this substance must be matter, in view of several indispensable properties of the substance we experience. Germane for us here is the third such property, that "substance is in flux and constitutes a physical time" (*RM* 10). It is evident that, with the term 'constitutes', he rejects at the outset the possibility of a time independent of the world of things. His reasons for this, I shall argue, follow from general considerations about what substance must be under these minimal assumptions.

I therefore disagree with Gale's analysis, which construes the many objections made by Santayana to the sentimental view of time as so many reductive proofs that **Santayana is not a reductionist**, B-Theory must supplant the A-Theory. Gale believes that the onus is on Santayana to give a reduction, and that his theory of time would fail at the outset without one. But whatever success Santayana may have in his argumentation, his efforts are not directed towards a reduction. Opponents of materialism and naturalism coming from the analytic school have long maintained that these theories fail in the absence of a detailed reduction of everything to empirical facts. More recently, some philosophers — Strawson was an early one — suggested that naturalism may be non-reductive and still be viable. Should philosophers not recognise as evident the fact that there may be dependencies in nature which science has so far not explained? and should philosophers not be prepared to deal with these, as do the scientists, despite their ignorance? Santayana is not given to the practice of reduction; he is a non-reductive naturalist of the most radical stripe. The realm of essence is his answer to any and all reductions, says John Lachs. On ethical issues, for instance, Santayana insists on a naturalism, but does not attempt to reduce goodness to material terms. In like fashion, his criticisms of sentimental time do not explain in any detail how such a bias arises, and would surely not be viable as reductions to material sources.

The non-reductive approach is understood perfectly by Gale. He perceives this characteristic in Santayana's treatment of Zeno's paradox; Santayana, he observes, "is not afraid of Zeno" (4), and is willing to let the scientists solve the problem. Just so! Gale has only to extend this excellent observation. **nor is he afraid of Zeno.** Santayana was unafraid to make morals natural, and in just the same manner was not afraid to accept physical time, while leaving to science its investigation

In McTaggart's B-Theory of time, one has the binary relations of 'before', 'after', and 'at the same time as', but not the richer three part division of 'past/present/future' found in the A-Theory.² An urgent absolute present,

² I hesitate to speak of McTaggart, in light of Gale's superior knowledge; but certainly Santayana did not share McTaggart's view that, without the A-Series, there could be no change and therefore no time. For Santayana's realm of matter, everything that exists, is perpetually in flux, and is indeed characterised by change. However, he does have to take pains to preserve something of this robust notion of time when he turns to the realm of truth, and these are difficulties which are reminiscent of McTaggart. Sprigge does not find any explicit reference to an influence of McTaggart on Santayana, but was not denying one. In regard to Russell, Gale senses an influence there as well, although this is not corroborated either. Of course, important influences in the opposite direction were acknowledged by Russell.

characteristic of the A-Theory, and especially a radical difference between the status of future events and past ones, are no part of Santayana's physical time. Does this mean that he holds a B-Theory? In Santayana's discussions, there is an omnipresent gulf between the hectic flux of the realm of matter and the static view of time recorded in the realm of truth. The time of McTaggart's B-Theory, however, does not fully represent time as seen from either of these two perspectives. In the realm of matter, the present has a part to play which is difficult to find in the B-Theory. One can speak of a relative present in the B-Theory, as simultaneous to some chosen event; or one may define it relative to some given set of events, as some moment earlier than the members of one subclass and later than the members of the complementary subclass. But a present defined in these ways will not play the fundamental role which it has in regard to the transcendental centres which concern Santayana. Each of these seems to define (*per impossible*) its own relative A-Theory. I find it difficult to reconcile his transcendental centres with McTaggart's B-Theory.

In contrast, the realm of truth is a view from nowhere in which there is neither hope nor fear, neither joy nor pain. In this eternal realm, we clearly do have an elimination of the present moment (*intrinsic or relative*) and there is consequently a decisive move away from A-Theory. But time itself and the binary B-Theory relations are retained only as essences of the forms of change, which characterise it in the eternally unchanging realm of truth. This doctrine evidently goes beyond the standard B-Theory seen as an account of physical time. These considerations yield four possible perspectives on time.

1. An A-Theory, in which the past and the future are intrinsically before and after an objective now.³ The universe is invariably at some stage in its development, and this stage is the intrinsic now.
2. Santayana's account of the physical time in the realm of matter.
3. A B-Theory, in which the only temporal facts are the relations of 'sooner than' and 'at the same time as'.
4. Santayana's Realm of Truth in which there are no transcendental centres, and in which the flux of time has disappeared, represented only by eternal essences marking the forms of changes.

According to Gale's interpretation, although *sentimental* time is 1 above, Santayana takes true physical time to be 3, and relies for his proof on a faulty reduction of the A-Theory of sentimental time to a B-Theory. I am suggesting, on the contrary, that Santayana's position is neither the A- nor the B-Theory; the status of time can be seen either in RM or in RT, neither of which is rendered by McTaggart's B-Theory

Gale may well feel that these comments skirt the main issue. The A-Theory holds that there is an intrinsic present, whereas the B-Theory denies this. Where does Santayana stand on this unambiguous point? Does he want to deny that, in the absence of living observers, there is a march of time from an absolute present into an immediate future? In scientific theory, there is no privileged time and a complete freedom to select and deal with arbitrary times — perhaps that of the big bang or that of the annihilation of the earth. But nothing in science rules out a belief in a real present

Is there an
objective
present?

³ Since the article (of grammar) makes unambiguous phrases like 'a now' and 'the now', these are written with neither quotes nor italics for the most part.

situated in the particular spot between these epochal times which has just then been achieved. Scientists do not hesitate to believe that there is a special now differing from other times due to its current realisation. Santayana, so good on the reality of existences in the absence of their perception, seems uninterested in the analogous notion of a present which is not perspectival. The now which he speaks of is that of a transcendental centre, and his concern is the tendency to give to one centre a special status commensurate with an emotional commitment, and to believe that there is some intrinsic difference between events before and events after this momentous now. No, he says; there is nothing about one's own centre which makes it exceptional in comparison with that of someone else. But I agree with Gale that he fails to show, if indeed he is trying to do so, that it cannot be exceptional in the sense that it is an objectively existing present.

Still, it is of interest to speculate on how the question might be answered in his philosophical system, and I shall consider the point in terms of what appears to be his usual type of reasoning in such a setting. He quite frequently offers a general remark like this: "That mankind is a race of animals living in a material world is the first presupposition of this whole inquiry. I should be playing false to myself and to the reader if I did not assume it" (DP 6). This might seem to be a throw-away line, but in my eyes it is significant and is a superior guide to the kernel of his naturalism than one finds in the introspective development of the second half of SAF. It offers a vision from outside the flow of events it envisages. It leaves no room for the notion that experience is at the heart of things, no room for a philosophy of the foreground. It encourages the view of knowledge that it cannot be literal, but is valid nevertheless, since it leads to fruitful interactions of organisms with things.

This simplest of models sheds some light on the issue at hand, turning on the question whether or not the observer lies entirely beyond the time determined by the flow of events. If the former, the observer would be something of a god, and would see things from the viewpoint of eternity. This is the realm of truth. But what about a case where the observer moves along with the flow of events without participating, making observations at a particular time which is special, not in the sense that the observer makes it important, but merely because the observation was made when the craft had reached a particular point in its voyage? It is difficult not to see things in this fashion, but Santayana appears not to make any appeal to such a model. Likely he would say that a perspective cannot be within time without participating in the events determining that time. However, I see nothing in his position that would rule out this perspective.⁴ In any case, it is unlikely that the point would much concern him, so long as the suggested observer would not introduce into the realm of matter a piece of egotism.

I turn to the refutations offered by Gale of various arguments he finds in Santayana. It will be clear, from the above, that in many cases I shall be offering comments rather than counter-arguments. For instance, Gale gives his knock-down argument against *any* B-Reduction toward the end of his paper, and this I accept it as a definitive refutation. His argument, in the more sophisticated setting of propositional attitudes, makes the very point on which Santayana relies — that sentimental time has to do with emotion

⁴ Of course, Santayana could well be thinking of the theory of relativity, which discredits any absolute notion of simultaneity.

and belief, whereas physical time does not. But as I read the text, Santayana does not even attempt a reduction of these sentiments.

However, I have some difficulty with the introduction into Santayana's position of an arcane theory of actualism, both with the B-Reduction and the Bivalence argument. Gale closely analyses an argument from a short passage (RT 83-4) where Santayana observes that several differently worded sentences are required to express the same "deliverance," due to the fact that the sentences are uttered at different times. This is a fairly straightforward point; however, Santayana finds equivocation in the sentence "Caesar is dead, long dead," and Gale attributes this to his acceptance of the theory of actualism. I thought on first reading, and I think now, that this equivocation for Santayana is concerned with two things, both different from this: first, the problem of reference to a non-existent thing, an issue which exercised Russell at about that time; and second, the powerful psychological effect names can have in seeming to bring to life things which are long dead. The text following these passages clearly indicates that the psychological effect was very much on his mind. I therefore would need further reasons for tying this sentence to a "perverse" doctrine of actualism about our inability to refer at any moment to properties of things they had in the past.

Gale seizes on Santayana's presentation of the example, which is expressed in terms of "assertions" and "propositions." Thus a single deliverance to the effect that Caesar was alive at a certain date has to be asserted in three different tensed forms, depending on the date on which they are asserted. Gale reads Santayana's term 'deliverance' as the tenseless propositional content common to the three assertions. I can agree to this. A single event may be seen as future at one time and as past at another later time. The truth about that event is eternal, so that there cannot be a variation of this kind in the true status of the event. It follows that the property of being future or being past is no intrinsic part of that event. Our knowledge claims must have an apparently contradictory form, due to the context of their assertion; but this contradiction is resolved when we deal with truth. Santayana himself draws this conclusion from the example: "This is a proof of the instability in knowledge in contrast to the fixity of truth" (RT 83). The truth for him is an "ideal record." That there is a truth follows from the fact that there is a world of events which it records in terms of the realisation of essence. The difficulties which arise concerning the formulation of this record he consigns to our theory of knowledge of the truth.

Gale says: "The most important job that the B-Theory does within Santayana's philosophical system is that it buttresses his relational theory of time," the theory that "events are not in time, but time is in events" (11). Gale's choice of the word 'buttresses' suggests that he admits other, more basic reasons for accepting the relational theory. However, he does not envisage the top-down arguments which I am attributing to Santayana. A primary property of matter, that it is "in flux and constitutes a physical time," is for Santayana "indispensable." As I read the text, this follows from his assumption that there is a single domain of things and events, and that everything which exists must be a constituent thereof. Included in this must be time, which otherwise would be an independent substance; its flow is merely a record of material changes.

For Gale, it is Leibniz's principle of the identity of indiscernibles which leads Santayana to reject the substantiality of time; if there were an interval in which there

**Actualism
Questioned.**

**Knowledge
unstable;
Truth fixed.**

**Relativity
of time
indispensable.**

were no change whatsoever, that interval must dissolve into a single moment. The citation he appeals to is impeccable: “[Since] each of its [absolute time’s] moments

No appeal to Leibniz. would be exactly like every other ... they would collapse into identity” (RM 78). Even so, I would ask him to consider, as equally plausible, a subtly different reading which takes the relational view

of time as given; this notes merely that his definition of a time determined by the flow of events does not permit any temporal interval with no change to measure it by — absolute time is a non-starter. Santayana is not offering an indirect proof that the denial of a relational theory would lead through Leibniz to a contradiction; rather he begins with the relational theory, and argues that this would make absurd any substantial time. Instead of using Leibniz to argue that a putative time interval must dissolve, he takes the more radical and satisfactory path of saying that there can be no time interval there in the first place.

A somewhat different argument used by Santayana makes clear that his point of departure is the relational theory itself. Speaking of two universes having no interface with each other, he says that neither could bear any temporal relation to the other; each would have its own temporal flow, entirely independent of the other.

For by physical time I understand an order of derivation integral to the flux of matter; so that if two worlds had no material connection, and neither was in any of its parts derived from the other, they could not possibly have positions in the same physical time. (RM 61)

This argument calls on his prior notion of the relational definition of time, in which an appeal to the Leibniz principle would be unhelpful.

In regard to Gale’s first two arguments, which base refutations of the A-Theory on analogies between space and time, I question whether Santayana wants his analogies to be seen as arguments. In each of these, Gale notes that Santayana will have his refutation insofar as the nature of space is the same as that of time. In the first argument, we note that it would be chauvinistic to give to the *here* a particular cosmic importance; if time has the same character as space, then by analogy one will reject the claim of the A-Theory that the *now* has some special status. The second case is similar, this time turning on our ability to select freely any moment as the present. For it is clear (or is it?) that one may freely select any place to call ‘here’. As obstacles to arguments of these two types, Gale offers several disanalogies between space and time — and of these he has an impressive arsenal.⁵ With these in mind, Gale argues that it is less chauvinist to insist on an intrinsic now than an intrinsic here, and less easy to make a particular choice for the now, than for the here, as a privileged selection. He is circumspect in stating these two arguments against the A-Theory; for it is hard to be sure that one’s disanalogy can be applied to the specific analogy Santayana is appealing to. I go further in this direction, and question whether Santayana’s analogies are meant as arguments at all. There are as many disanalogies as analogies in “Pictorial Space and Sentimental Time,” Chapter IV of RM, and I do not find any indication that much hangs on either. One would certainly not expect Santayana to forego metaphors of analogy between the two, merely because they were not essential to some argument. I wonder whether his analogies have any purpose other than a descriptive one. He may perceive an animal bias, which distorts our understanding of time, and to a lesser extent space, without making any comparisons between them as arguments.

⁵ See Richard M. Gale, “Disanalogies Between Space and Time,” *Process Studies* 25 (1996).

Some Abbreviations for Santayana's Works

AFSL	<i>Animal Faith and Spiritual Life</i> , ed. John Lachs	PGS	<i>The Philosophy of George Santayana</i> , ed. P. A. Schilpp
BR	<i>Birth of Reason and Other Essays</i>	POML	<i>Physical Order and Spiritual Liberty</i> ed. John and Shirley Lachs
COUS	<i>Character and Opinion in the United States</i>	PP	<i>Persons and Places: Fragments of Autobiography</i>
DL	<i>Dialogues in Limbo</i>	PSL	<i>Platonism and the Spiritual Life</i>
DP	<i>Dominations and Powers</i>	RB	<i>Realms of Being</i> (One volume edition)
EGP	<i>Egotism in German Philosophy</i>	RE	<i>The Realm of Essence</i> . RB Bk. I
ICG	<i>The Idea of Christ in the Gospels</i>	RM	<i>The Realm of Matter</i> . RB Bk II
IPR	<i>Interpretations of Poetry and Religion</i>	RT	<i>The Realm of Truth</i> . RB Bk III
LP	<i>The Last Puritan</i>	RS	<i>The Realm of Spirit</i> . RB Bk IV
LR	<i>The Life of Reason, or The Phases of Human Progress</i>	SAF	<i>Scepticism and Animal Faith</i>
LR1	Vol. 1. <i>Reason in Common Sense</i>	SB	<i>The Sense of Beauty</i>
LR2	Vol. 2. <i>Reason in Society</i>	SE	<i>Soliloquies in England and Later Soliloquies</i>
LR3	Vol. 3. <i>Reason in Religion</i>	TTMP	<i>Some Turns of Thought in Modern Philosophy</i>
LR4	Vol. 4. <i>Reason in Art</i>	TPP	<i>Three Philosophical Poets</i>
LR5	Vol. 5. <i>Reason in Science</i>	WD	<i>Winds of Doctrine</i>
OS	<i>Obiter Scripta: Lectures, Essays, and Reviews</i> ed. J. Buchler and B. Schwartz		

Overheard in Seville

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If Santayana's notion of time is not determined by narrower arguments of the kind offered by Gale, then what are the more general considerations which lead to it? One factor is clearly his account of truth, and here a leading influence on his thought was Spinoza. In his discussions of truth, Santayana often speaks of the form of eternity, and always seems to have this in mind. Truth is eternally unchanging, as is essence, and this notion of the timeless shapes his treatment of some of the problems about time being discussed; for our representation of time, like all representations, must be in terms of eternal essences.

One of the jobs of Santayana's B-Theory, according to Gale, is "to satisfy his gnostic quest to be the knower of all time and eternity" (11). This stands in need of qualification. Certainly it is of the nature of spirit to seek universal knowledge. But Santayana makes no claims for himself or for anybody else that literal and complete knowledge is attainable; indeed, this would be unlikely or impossible for living organisms in the material world. The realm of truth, however, is just such a repository, being an ontological realm without individual perspectives and transcendental centres — an ideal record for all time and eternity. Spirit does indeed aspire to a perfect knowledge of the truth, but it must settle for an adequate one. Santayana thinks that much of modern philosophy follows Socrates in setting aside as unimportant to moral philosophy a study of the nature of the world. But the fact that the literal truth about matter is inaccessible does not render physics redundant for a study of the good life; on the contrary, it is essential to size up what is possible and what is not, through interactions with matter and representations through essence. Our symbolic physics may not go to the heart of matter, but it is essential for intelligent action. The thirst for universal knowledge must be tempered, but symbolic knowledge is there for the asking; failures to achieve a life of reason have sources other than the lack of knowledge.

As cited by Gale, James demands in his world a universal character "for which our emotions and active propensities shall be a match." What does this mean? Is he requiring that our understanding of what is out there should reflect our emotions and propensities, and calling this a sense of rationality? He certainly sounds as if for him the truth is secondary to human assessments and capabilities. If so, then Santayana would place him in the Socratic tradition of setting aside physical considerations in favour of moral ones, which for him would not only be an assault on the truth, but as well inimical to intelligent action.

To be boosted by an illusion is not to live better than to live in harmony with the truth; it is not nearly so safe, not nearly so sweet, and not nearly so fruitful. (COUS 87)

James might not object to such a statement. But it would lose some of its bite, to the extent that he sees the truth as ancillary to safety, sweetness, and fruition.

Santayana sees as illusory any assignment of truth to a theory of sentimental time, even though, from the perspective of pragmatism, it has fine empirical credentials. It is an essential cog in a well-functioning and flourishing life, and consequently a part of our sense of rationality. What more could one ask of a truth? One might be led on to the anthropomorphic view of time and of the entire cosmos. It is Santayana's more robust notion of truth which leads him to see this as subjectivist and harmful. When seen under the form of eternity, there are no present moments. Attention to the present moment is crucial for our survival and prosperity, but this does not give it cosmic priority.

It is entirely compatible with Santayana's system for the past/present/future triad of sentimental time to serve an essential part in an active life, despite the fact that no such particular triad may have a special status in physical time. The situation with his ethics is similar. Moral virtue does not have any absolute or cosmological standing; goods are relative, not in the sense that they are arbitrary, but in the sense that their goodness is entirely determined by human experience and humanly conceived ideals. However, his naturalist philosophy is not "stripped of all properties that give human life a meaning" (1). On the contrary, matter has (in ways not well understood) brought forth spirit, which permits animal life to survey the entire scene, and to make a distinction between virtue and vice. That the good is not cosmic, but is generated within life, does not in the least discredit our valuing, pursuing, and demanding a chosen good, nor detract from its validity.

The situation with goodness is instructive about the concentration on a present moment found in the A-Theory, which Santayana calls "the normal pathology of the animal mind" (RB 253). Our focus on the present and our tendency to believe in an absolute division between a dead past and an ominous future — these are not intrinsic parts of physical time for Santayana. However, such a focus is an indispensable feature of human action. The extra weight we place on our own past, present, and future is an inherent part of our active life, despite the lack of any absolute sanction and of any absolute place in the material universe for that present. This does not hinder us from living and acting in the present, nor should it.

Of course, this appeal to analogy between morals and sentimental time carries little weight for believers in absolute moral imperatives. Quite the contrary; these might use the comparison to argue that sentimental time *must* be absolute, just as are moral standards. It is therefore of interest to note Santayana's critique of any absolute ethics, in which he holds that ethical ideals lose all authority when they are taken to be absolute imperatives detached from actual interests. Religions and societies enforce moral codes by declaring them cosmic truths, but this tendency makes it impossible to rectify pernicious dogmas, hypostasised as they are into universal verities. When and only when the validity of moral principles is grounded in the welfare of society, is there an effective way to correct them; only then do they have authority; only then is the life of reason possible.

Can we extend the analogy between ethics and the theory of time in this direction? I think that we can, to a certain extent. A focus on a present moment is inevitable and does not lead to difficulties, so long as it is not given an absolute status. Treating it as absolute, I speculate, might inhibit other important temporal considerations. Two of Gale's examples are helpful. In the first, he postulates the necessity of a major surgery. He is correct to point out that we would much prefer the operation already to have been completed, rather than being immediately upcoming. Agreed; nobody will fail to make the distinction here between past and future. Less obvious is his second example. Suppose we have only twenty years left to live in a total life span of eighty. We would surely prefer to reject this prospect, Gale says, in favour of an alternative leaving us a full fifty years to live, even if the life span in this case were reduced to seventy years. But surely one might prefer to leave things unchanged. It all depends on the fruitfulness of our past career and the prospects open for the future. One might feel that one has achieved a self-realisation unlikely to be repeated, and that it might

Relativity
of ethics,

and of
sentimental
time.

Gale's two
examples.

entail too much suffering for the prospect of repetition to be attractive. Santayana, for instance, said that what he had longed for more than anything else was completion, and that with his final book, *Dominations and Powers*, he had finished what he had projected to write; he felt that he had brought out of himself what it was in him to do. I seriously doubt that he would have longed to repeat these efforts.

The first of these examples introduces sentimental time in an extreme case, and Gale reinforces this by placing the surgery a mere one hour prior in the one case and one hour after in the other. The patient will be concerned exclusively with the now. In the second example, all focus on the now of an A-Theory evaporates. The situation there concerns the good life, and if the definition of moral agency is too narrow to include it, then the notion of moral agency cannot cover the whole of ethics. I wonder if Gale is not exaggerating the extent to which morality is practised with a focus on the present. His account does not envisage the sort of rapid shifts the mind makes and ought to make between considerations of the present moment and longer term ones not concerned with the now — and indeed dateless considerations in which one has a glimpse of things as they might appear in the realm of truth.

I concede that the A-Theory, as envisaged by Gale, would not make this kind of flexibility impossible. Nevertheless, it may discourage the kind of moral consideration found in the second example. (By the same token, Gale **We have forgotten the Greeks.** should surely not say more than that the view of time embraced by Santayana encourages a certain detachment.) Santayana certainly believes that philosophers who are too much enticed by the foreground and who hypostasise the present experience are apt to miss the temporal plasticity essential to the life of reason. The sort of moral agency described by Gale seems to be open to the sort of criticism Santayana directed against James:

But what is a good life? Had William James, had the people about him, had modern philosophers anywhere, any notion of that? I cannot think so. They had much experience of personal goodness, and love of it; they had standards of character and right conduct; but as to what might render human existence good, excellent, beautiful, happy, and worth having as a whole, their notions were utterly thin and barbarous. They had forgotten the Greeks, or never known them. (COUS 85-6)

In Gale's view, Santayana tries to abandon a normal and useful focus on the present moment, leading him by reduction to a B-Theory of time, and a consequent meditative model of life. As I see it, reduction is not on his mind, and he is dealing with occasional lapses away from the present moment towards the timeless view of things proper to the realm of truth, perhaps in the interests of meditation but more often in reflection on an ideal life of reason. Gale sees a reduction of sentimental time to that of science; and I see the oscillation between glimpses of the eternal and sentimental time.

Let me note here that I see Santayana's treatment of spirituality rather differently than does Gale. In *RS* and in some other late works, Santayana gives us what he calls a "lay religion," aimed at a liberation of the spirit for the one in a thousand who have the aptitude, preference, determination, and stamina for such a regimen. He sees this as a religious question, in an individualistic sense; but this does not invalidate his discussions of society. It is not up to the naturalist philosopher to insist on this austere vocation for the many unsuited to a life of contemplation. The move to an exclusive spirituality is a lay form of salvation for those suited to it and having psyches sufficiently integrated for the task. But for most, spirituality cannot be more than momentary, and improves the tone of our lives rather more than it alters the kinds of actions we take.

Santayana's doctrines, both early and late, take these into account. In LR, he asks how one may balance the spirituality requisite for understanding and universal sympathy, with the threat this might pose to the maintenance of one's own ideals. He calls for a single-minded pursuit of those ideals, but for an external policy, which is charitable — with no claim that this would be easy. The same theme recurs in the late "Apologia" essay in PGS. He applauds the text of the *Bhagavad Gita* for espousing a version of spirituality which invites a return to the world of action, for those like Arjuna whose destiny calls for it. Once again, he looks for a balance. Much of what he says about spirit is not merely devoted to those committed to a spiritual life; moments of pure spirit may enrich all lives, without at all disrupting the workaday existence. In a measure and for a time, people may be moved from their selfish pursuits, as elaborated in the prudential morality of the life of reason, toward a more genuine and disinterested justice or charity. It is important here to keep separate Santayana's own sentiments from his philosophy. In the latter, he only sees the spiritual life as appropriate for a few. In his own case, however, it is clear that in his later life there was a marked turn towards the post-rational. The issue is a contentious one, and Gale is far from alone in his reading of Santayana's position.

Moral agency has its setting in physical time; it is guided by animal faith and the dictates of reason. It focuses on the present moment, but if this focus becomes excessive, this will hinder intelligent action, and thwart a healthy moral position. Longer perspectives, freed from a frozen bond to an intrinsic present moment, are wanted not just for spirituality, but for an ability to size up one's place in the world and to develop ideals which might bear fruit. I believe that Santayana makes a good case for retaining moral action without sacrificing the view of time as seen by science and a robust notion of truth. His view allows the flexibility which sentimental time needs to function. In his bifurcationist account, sentimental time will serve its moral purposes without demanding hypostasis. But there is a truth of the matter, in which he reckons that the foreground disappears. Nothing is gained and much is lost by those who ignore the truth or deny it.

Gale's intriguing claim that the surest way to penetrate to the heart of any system of philosophy is through its treatment of time is certainly not refuted by Santayana's naturalism. A central problem he wants to solve in his RM is to find a satisfactory representation of the temporal flux of matter. To do this, he assumes throughout that this representation must be given in terms of fixed essences; even the doctrine of natural moments remains faithful to this. The raw flux is not intuited; but it must not be excluded, and appears as an irrational thrust of existence. However with the introduction of essence comes a different perspective on time, that of the eternal. This means that both the subjective bias of sentimental time and a serene view under the aspect of eternity have their place; which one will dominate for any person depends on the psyche of that person. Questions about time do take one to the very centre of his naturalism, as Gale would have it. However, the question whether Santayana's moral philosophy moves too far in the direction of spirituality to the prejudice of action will not be answered by his stance on time.

**Time real
and central,
but not the
determining
moral factor.**

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Santayana and Valéry

Many pages have been written about Santayana's "Americanism" and many, also, about his Spanishness.¹ Yet the least inadequate characterization of Santayana is perhaps that he was a cosmopolitan writer and thinker, a gifted polyglot whose access to several linguistic worlds made it possible for him to inhabit a rich variety of literary and philosophical spaces. (Whether he would have liked being called "cosmopolitan" is quite another matter: we have ample textual evidence for believing that he wouldn't.)

In what follows, I offer some remarks about the unmistakable presence of a distinctly French strain in Santayana's writings. I broach some parallels between Santayana and the French modern author he probably admired most, namely Paul Valéry, focusing upon two areas: the nature of philosophy and the nature of mind.

Talking of his younger days, Santayana points out that "French literature had been [his] daily bread: it had taught [him] how to think, but had not given [him] much to think about" (SE 3). He also tells us ("A General Confession" in PGS) that as a young man he used to read the *Revue des Deux Mondes* from cover to cover and that he was acquainted with the works of Hippolyte Taine and Ernest Renan (PGS 9). (Although Joel Porte in his introduction to *Interpretations of Poetry and Religion* insists on the role played by Renan in shaping Santayana's "curious position with regard to the Catholic Church,"² the importance of Renan and even more of Taine, that "professed naturalist," as intellectual models for Santayana, has not been adequately assessed.)

What, then, is this art of thought — for surely it is no science — that Santayana claims to have learned from French literature? McCormick provides a clue when he observes that behind *Soliloquies in England* "are also Montaigne and the French tradition of concision, lucidity and point."³ Santayana himself, in the opening paragraph of his essay on "The philosophy of M. Bergson," alludes to "the precision of phrase and measured judgement traditional in French philosophy" (WD 22), and in a letter to Richard Lyon, dated July 1949, he reflects that "although there are not many great French philosophers, they all write well, because they know how to see and to judge the world. They are not so good in the heights and the depths, because these can't be written about in good French, and they don't talk inflated nonsense about those super- or infra-human things, because the French language will not permit it."⁴ In any case, there is little doubt that what Santayana claims to have learned from the French centers on two things: the quest for lucidity and the demands of polished style. The quest for lucidity, in other words the endeavor not to deceive oneself, including about one's own proclivity to self-deception, leads inevitably to Montaigne, to whom all the roads of modern scepticism and naturalism lead anyway.

¹ This paper is a revised version of the paper presented to the Santayana Society in Boston on August 13 1998. I thank Morris Grossman, Angus Kerr-Lawson, Herman Saatkamp, and Irving Singer for their comments and suggestions.

² Joel Porte, Introduction to George Santayana, *Interpretations of Poetry and Religion* (Cambridge, Mass. and London: The MIT Press, 1989), p. xxvii. To be cited as IPR.

³ John McCormick, *George Santayana: A Biography* (New York: Knopf, 1987), p. 237. To be cited as MCCORMICK.

⁴ *The Letters of George Santayana*, ed. Daniel Cory (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1955), p. 380. Whether recent French philosophy confirms Santayana's judgement about the impossibility of "talking inflated nonsense" in French, I leave up to the reader.

Santayana's plea for honesty in philosophy — "philosophy is nothing if not honest" (SAF 187) — calls to mind Montaigne's famous address to his reader: "*c'est ici un livre de bonne foi, lecteur,*" and the Montaigne quotation at the end of *Egotism in German philosophy* provides the best short approximation to Santayana's "topographical" vision we could possibly hope for:

He who sets before him, as in a picture, this vast image of our mother Nature in her entire majesty; who reads in her aspect such universal and continual variety; who discerns himself therein and not himself only but a whole kingdom, to be but a most delicate dot — he alone esteems things according to the just measure of their greatness. (EGP 165)

As for style, Santayana's extraordinary "quotability" should be understood in the light of the French aphoristic tradition (whose wealth is indeed unmatched, with La Rochefoucault, La Bruyère, Pascal, Vauvenargues, Chamfort and a few others). In this tradition, lucidity and aphoristic form are not unrelated; the latter bears eloquent, if concise, witness to the temporal and formal limitations of what we could call the human animal's lucidity-span, which is short and improbable without the help of "good" linguistic form.

The two French philosophers about whom one would expect to hear in connection with Santayana are Descartes and Bergson. *Scepticism and Animal Faith* is best described as a subversion of Cartesianism by Cartesian means, and we gather from Santayana's remarks about Bergson's philosophy in *WD* that he perceived the vitalistic views developed in *L'évolution créatrice* as a somewhat sinister travesty of his naturalism. But I shall postpone until another occasion the analysis of these interesting and complicated relations, and will proceed to examine the affinities between Santayana and Valéry.

In chapter 4 of his study on Santayana, Anthony Woodward explores some interesting parallels between Musil, Valéry and Santayana. Woodward sees "the outline of an archetype beginning to take shape: all three were ironic, spectatorial temperaments, attracted toward a detached sphere of consciousness on the vertical axis."⁵ He focuses on several shared factors pertaining to the spiritual life — foremost the combination of "sceptical relativism" with what he calls "strategies of spiritual transcendence that interiorise traditional notions of the divine" (WOODWARD 105). For my part, I would point out another common trait, which Woodward omits: Musil, Valéry and Santayana are men of letters who share a deep-seated distrust of what Jacques Bouveresse, in a recent paper on "l'Affaire Sokal", has aptly called "literarism," a neologism that is to literature what "scientism" is to science. Just as someone who succumbs to scientism is led to believe that science exhausts the sphere of rational inquiry, so a "literarist" credits literature with a (wildly unrealistic and monopolistic) capacity to reveal the innermost recesses of the really real. It is to something like "literarism," I believe, that Santayana is referring when he denounces idealists, who, "from the fact that observation is involved in observing anything, infer that observation is the only observed fact" (SAF 293). "The world of literature is sacred to these bookish minds; only the world of nature and science arouses their suspicion and their dislike" (SAF 295). In other words, Musil, Valéry and Santayana can be jointly characterized by their refusal to consider science as the arch-enemy of poetry, and by their desire to cultivate the virtues of precision and order even regarding matters which are supposed to be among the most impervious to exactitude

⁵ Anthony Woodward, *Living in the Eternal: a Study of George Santayana* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1988) p. 102. To be cited as WOODWARD.

and clarity. Of course, this refusal and desire admittedly find very different expressions in each of them.

Santayana expressed his admiration for Valéry on several occasions: "How he understands the modern world!" he exclaims in a 1931 post-card to Abbot; in *The Genteel Tradition at Bay*, Valéry's name appears in the company of Einstein, Freud, Proust, Lenin and Mussolini, (and football), as modern compensations for the fact that we do not live the life of ancient Greeks. (I withhold comments on the dubious compensation provided by Lenin and Mussolini.) And as late as May 1952, Santayana was busy reading Valéry's correspondence and finding it "most illuminating as to his anti-philosophy" (MCCORMICK 500). Readers of Santayana will understand his interest here: Santayana's general assessment of the course taken by modern philosophy, with the notable exception of Spinoza, is that its "advances in analysis and self-knowledge ... have been neutralized ... by a total intellectual cramp or by a colossal folly" (SE 216). "The progress of philosophy has not been of such a sort that the latest philosophers are the best; it is quite the other way" (SE 208); for "instead of adding [discovered truths and methods before unknown] to the essential wisdom of their predecessors," philosophers have tended to "[deny] the obvious because other people had pointed it out" (SE 209). Thus, on the whole, Santayana views modern philosophy as an ego-driven activity and all philosophical systems as "accidental paraphernalia"⁶:

Viewed from a sufficient distance, all systems of philosophy are seen to be personal, temperamental, accidental, and premature. They treat partial knowledge as if it were total knowledge: they take peripheral facts for central and typical facts: they confuse the grammar of human expression, in language, logic, or moral estimation, with the substantial structure of things. In a word, they are human heresies. (OS 71)

Furthermore, "philosophy fell into [a] snare when in modern times it ceased to be the art of thinking and tried to become that impossible thing, the science of thought" (SAF 254).

Valéry developed his "anti-philosophical" thoughts mainly in his posthumously published *Cahiers*.⁷ This anti-philosophy originates in a fairly straightforward critique of ordinary language. Ordinary language cannot capture or represent reality faithfully, in part because of the fortuitous and disorderly history of our linguistic forms. "Nothing is easier, nor more dangerous," writes Valéry, "than to endow this rugged geological formation with the properties of an architecture" (CAHIERS xv, 60). One of the consequences of such misapprehension of the true nature of everyday language is that "most men think only in speech." ("*la plupart des hommes ne pensent qu'en paroles*" (CAHIERS v, 490)). There are two other corollaries: the first is that we tend to believe that if a word exists, there must be some real phenomenon for it to refer to (e.g. "immortality", "the soul"); the second is the converse: we tend to ignore whatever lacks a name. And, as Valéry maintains again and again, it is certain that the universe contains many a crucial phenomenon which, though lacking a name, exists nonetheless. This holds in particular for our understanding of the mind: we are

⁶ *Persons and Places* (Cambridge, Mass., and London: MIT Press, 1986), p.392.

⁷ Cf. Paul Valéry, *Cahiers* (Paris: C.N.R.S., 1957-61). This is a facsimile edition, in 29 volumes, of the notebooks containing Valéry's reflections on the nature and functioning of the human mind to which he devoted every morning of his adult life and which he understandably considered his most important achievement. For a thematic edition, see Paul Valéry, *Cahiers*, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade (Paris: Gallimard, 1973). In what follows, the numbering of the quotations follows the facsimile edition. To be cited as CAHIERS.

systematically misled by the existence of imprecise vocabularies and by the absence of certain words or concepts that have not yet been invented.

Now, according to Valéry, traditional philosophers are typically seeking “truth” in words and combinations of words — and are unlikely to find it there. For him, most philosophical problems arise with the feeling that words somehow inherently contain valuable secrets and treasures of thought which the mind is supposed to extract. But, as he says, “one forgets that words have only a transitive and temporary role. One assumes that a word has a meaning and that this meaning is independent of everything and in particular of my instantaneous functioning” (CAHIERS IV, 929). Thus, the fundamental *faux pas* of philosophy (to use a Santayanian phrase) consists in mistaking language, which is only a means, for an end: “Almost all of ‘philosophy’ comes down to the transformation of a word which used to be a useful means, a product of utility, a device — into a stopping-point, a resistance, a difficulty, an obstacle — before which the ‘thinker’ is left stamping indefinitely” (CAHIERS XXVIII, 349). Valéry insists that “the philosopher believes in the word in itself — and his problems are the problems of words in themselves, of words whose obscuration comes about through stoppage and isolation” (CAHIERS XII, 502). When someone asks, as St. Augustine did, what is “time,” he is asking a question which is by definition unanswerable since, as Valéry observes, “a word of this type has no single meaning outside expressions and composition” (CAHIERS XIII, 806). “What must be elucidated are not words — not God, cause, matter, world, will — but sentences.”⁸

Santayana’s approach to language, like Valéry’s, emphasizes its contingent, organic, and historical roots:

Language, while essentially significant viewed in its function, is indefinitely wasteful, being automatic and tentative in its origin. It overloads itself, and being primarily music and a labyrinth of sounds, it develops an articulation and method of its own, which, only in the end and with much inexactness, reverts to its function of designation.⁹

Discourse as a whole is a sheer accident, initiated, if initiated at all, by some ambushed power, not only in its existence, but in its duration, direction, and scope. (SAF 134)

Unsurprisingly, in his late “imaginary lectures” on “The False Steps of Philosophy”, Santayana came to regard “the trick of hypostasising ideas or taking words for things” as “the radical, the inevitable, the everlasting false step of philosophy” (BR 155). Although there may be some truth to Timothy Sprigge’s contention that “[Santayana] is at his weakest on such occasions as he makes comments about the nature of language,”¹⁰ one could also argue, with John Lachs, that Santayana’s (admittedly somewhat crude) naturalistic approach to language prevented him from falling prey to the currently prevalent and unfortunate belief that “since language mediates our cognitive contact with the world, the best or the only way to discern the general features of reality is by attending to the way we articulate or shape them through our speech.”¹¹ It is noteworthy, in any case, that Valéry and Santayana, two masters of literary expression, perhaps by reason of their command of language, warn insistently against the dangers of word-idolatry.

We should point out, however, lest we make forced parallels between Santayana and Valéry, that the doubts of the former concerning our access to truth, unlike those

⁸ CAHIERS IV, 376 (a version of Frege’s contextual principle!).

⁹ *The Life of Reason*, one-volume edition, (London: Constable & Co., 1954), p. 331. The abbreviated edition to be cited as LR-A.

¹⁰ Timothy Sprigge, *Santayana* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), p. 220.

¹¹ John Lachs, *George Santayana* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1988), p. 128.

of the latter, are neither restricted to an exposure of linguistic obstacles nor limited to philosophy as such. The pitfalls of naming constitute only a special case of the very general and limitative epistemological thesis implicit in Santayana's phrase: "knowledge is a salutation, not an embrace," and stated more explicitly in the preface to *Realms of Being*:

Possession of the absolute truth is not merely by accident beyond the range of particular minds; it is incompatible with being alive, because it excludes any particular station, organ, interest, or date of survey: the absolute truth is undiscoverable just because it is not a perspective. Perspectives are essential to animal apprehension; an observer, himself a part of the world he observes, must have a particular station in it; he cannot be equally near to everything, nor internal to anything but himself; of the rest he can only take views, abstracted according to his interests. (RB xiii)

Valéry often alludes to the "invisibility of true philosophy": "Philosophy is imperceptible. It is never to be found in the writings of philosophers — you can feel it in all human works that don't concern philosophy and it evaporates as soon as the author wants to philosophize. Philosophy shows in the union of man and any particular subject or goal. It disappears as soon as man starts pursuing it — proof of this can be had from professional philosophers who, one fine day, catch a glimpse of philosophy on some unpremeditated occasion. But they try to prolong — and the conditions are already gone" (CAHIERS II, 85). Therefore: "There is no more outrageous mistake than to count as philosophers only the philosophers" (CAHIERS V, 812).

Valéry offers many provocative and deflationary definitions of philosophy. Here are a few:

philosophy: verbal solutions to verbal problems; a philosophical problem is a problem one doesn't know how to state; philosophy: an attempt to act with insufficient means; impotence is characteristic of philosophy; metaphysics: erudite answer to naive questions; all metaphysics is the result of a defective use of language; deification of the verb 'to be' — therein lies fully half of philosophy; the language of philosophy has all the defects of technical language but none of its qualities. It is a language for followers, not for scientists; most philosophical problems are such that they vanish as soon as we state them¹²

and even more reminiscent of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* and of logical positivism:

Most philosophical problems are meaningless (*sont des non-sens*); what I mean is that in general you cannot 'state' them precisely without destroying them. (CAHIERS V, 576)

Expressing his basic reproof to philosophers, Valéry notes on several occasions that philosophy's essential business is to feign "ignorance of what we know and knowledge of what we ignore." In *Mon Faust*, for example, Mephistopheles describes the game philosophers play thus: "they are happy to understand each other just enough to keep alive their disagreement, which is their only reason for being in any case ... Besides, the whole game consists in pretending to ignore what one knows and to know what one ignores."¹³ This brings to mind Santayana's much quoted passage about "contemporary" philosophers:

They have lively wits, but they seem to me like children playing blind-man's-buff; they are keenly excited at not knowing where they are. They are really here, in the common natural world, where there is nothing in particular to threaten or allure them; and they have only to remove their philosophical bandages in order to perceive it. (SE 210)

¹² CAHIERS, XIII, 551; XIII, 624; IV, 398; X, 607; XI, 116; II, 353; XI, 810; XVI, 268; XI, 265.

¹³ Paul Valéry, *Mon Faust (Ébauches)* (Paris: Gallimard, 1946), p. 180.

Could there be any way of practicing philosophy that would make it acceptable, perhaps even significant, in the eyes of Valéry or Santayana?

There could. According to Valéry, "the philosopher must resign himself to the condition of an artist — and his system to that of a symphony" (CAHIERS IX, 847). That would reverse the *faux pas* of mistaking linguistic means for cognitive ends. If only philosophy could accept its status as an art of language, treating deliberately language as an end and relinquishing any pretensions to use it as an instrument delivering a special kind of universal knowledge! But that, of course, is precisely what, by the very nature of its hubristic project, philosophy is unable to do. Thus, "philosophy is a literary genre whose distinguishing mark is that it is never recognized as such by those who practice it" (CAHIERS VIII, 845). It is "the art (which doesn't want to be one) of arranging undefinable words in more or less exciting or pleasant combinations" (CAHIERS XV, 647). Valéry gives voice to his (somewhat mitigated) admiration for Nietzsche by remarking that he is an example of what "ex-philosophy" could become if it were granted an awareness of being an art (CAHIERS XVI, 50). But philosophy, unlike poetry, seems constitutionally unable to turn to its advantage its dependence on ordinary language: "Philosophy is gradually and unwillingly led to place itself under the protection of aesthetics or rather under the unassailable appearance of play — the philosophers themselves being the last to realize it" (CAHIERS XIII, 382).

Santayana's preferred method for "becoming a philosopher without being a heretic" (that is, without relinquishing their capacity to see things as they are) coincides with Valéry's above-mentioned advice: "It lies in confessing that a system of philosophy is a personal work of art which gives a specious unity to some chance vista in the cosmic labyrinth. To confess this is to confess a notorious truth; yet it would be something novel if a philosopher should substitute the pursuit of sincerity for the pursuit of omniscience" (OS 75). As one of the main characters in Santayana's novel *The Last Puritan* declares:

The trouble with you philosophers is that you misunderstand your vocation. You ought to be poets, but you insist on laying down the law for the universe, physical and moral, and are vexed with one another because your inspirations are not identical.¹⁴

In sum, Santayana, like Valéry, entertained remarkably few illusions about the epistemological status of philosophy, including his own:

"And all that you yourself have written, here and elsewhere, about essence, is it not true?" No, I reply, it is not true, nor meant to be true. It is a grammatical or possibly a poetical construction having, like mathematics or theology, a certain internal vitality and interest; but in the direction of truth-finding, such constructions are merely instrumental like any language or any telescope. (RB 418)

Of course, Valéry's and Santayana's relations to traditional philosophy differ in many ways. As Judith Robinson acknowledges, the danger of destruction for destruction's sake lurks in Valéry's tendency to lump all philosophers together. Valéry confesses that "in philosophy [he] feels like a barbarian in an Athens where he knows perfectly well that very valuable objects surround him and that all he sees is respectable; but where he gets flustered, feels boredom and disquiet, a vague veneration together with superstitious awe, interspersed with a brutal desire to break everything and to put fire to all those mysterious marvels for which [he] can find no model in his soul."¹⁵ Unsantayanan feelings indeed! The man who writes "Sanity,

¹⁴ *The Last Puritan* (London: Constable & Co., 1935), p. 602.

¹⁵ Paul Valéry, *Oeuvres*, vol. I, (Paris: Gallimard,), pp. 791-792.

thy name is Greece" (SE 212) can hardly partake in them. In general, Santayana's distrust of philosophy is more selective and measured than Valéry's, though not necessarily less incisive. Where Valéry would see the "ramblings" of philosophers "confined between four words," Santayana manages to detect "charm and profundity" (SE 216). It is also characteristic that, in spite of his intense opposition to idealism or transcendentalism ("a dangerous cure to a harmless disease, inducing a panic to introduce a fable" (LR-A 486)), Santayana never denies the philosophical significance of this school of thought, insofar as it tries to carry out a "reversion to the immediate [which] may be recommended by way of a cathartic, to free the mind from ancient obstructions." (LR-A 485).

We turn to the philosophy of mind, where the affinities between Santayana and Valéry run deep and wide. Both are naturalists convinced that most traditional philosophical problems concerning the mind start from the implicit idea that the human mind enjoys a privileged place in nature, or worse, that the universe exists merely in order to beget the human mind. In Santayana's words: they are the result of egotism (Valéry uses the word "anthropocentrism"); both are admirable analysts of the fundamental limitations that are imposed on the mind by its natural origins and embodied condition. Valéry shuns speculations about the "real nature of mind" and is more reluctant than Santayana to choose between spiritualism and materialism (two options he deems equally metaphysical); yet, he affirms that, if forced to make a choice, materialism should clearly be preferred for methodological reasons:

Spiritualism and materialism nowadays are only of historical interest. But if one had to choose between these two colors, I satisfy myself that the more you value the "dignity of the mind," the more you should choose the second. The reason is that spiritualism says what it likes; while the other has sworn to explain and subjects itself to severe conditions and tests — so severe in fact that they sometimes lead to a desertion of the position.¹⁶

Perhaps the most striking convergence in this area is that brought to the fore in Woodward's study: the fact that Santayana's crucial distinction of spirit and psyche closely parallels Valéry's contrast between the *Moi-Pur* and the *Moi-Trouble* (the *Moi-Pur* being, in Woodward's words, "the element of the self that witnesses and cancels out from some interior spiritual distance the perturbations of the troubled 'lower' self" (WOODWARD 102)). These similarities notwithstanding, an extremely significant difference subsists between Santayana's and Valéry's approaches to the mind.

Let us accept, with current cognitive wisdom, that the two following components are jointly necessary for a sound conception of the mind: first, a good grasp of the principles, logic, and scope of Darwinian evolutionary explanations; and second, a robust sense of, and interest in, the possible formal constraints on what Valéry referred to as "the mechanics of the mind" (and what we today would call computational models of mental capacities).¹⁷

My point here concerning Valéry and Santayana is that what one has, the other lacks, and vice-versa. Valéry's main aim in his *Cahiers* is to explore avenues that might lead to a scientific analysis of mind, where by "scientific" Valéry means only the endeavor to describe observable properties as accurately as possible. A continually recurring distinction in the *Cahiers* is that between the "formal" or

¹⁶ CAHIERS VI, 316. See also Santayana's SAF 286: "I think those who deny the existence of spirit, although their language is rash and barbarous, are honestly facing the facts, and are on the trail of a truth."

¹⁷ See Steven Pinker, *How the Mind Works* (New York, London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1997).

“functional” aspect of mental operations and their “meaningful” or “contentful” aspect. In Valéry’s terminology, he is “looking for the conditions of a thought that would not be this or that thought,” and seeking to understand “how the particular character of a given thought, whatever it may be, is amenable in the first place to those conditions” (CAHIERS XIII, 831). “The independence of operations from their content,” says Valéry, “is the pre-eminent intellectual fact” (CAHIERS II, 241). It is not widely known, I believe, that Valéry was very much ahead of his time in thinking that there are mathematical languages well adapted for representing this formal aspect of mental functioning and that he wasn’t content with speculating about a possible formal analysis of thought, but actually explored different mathematical domains which seemed promising to him in that respect.¹⁸

On the whole, this formalistic aspect is absent from Santayana’s account of mind and consciousness, which remains mostly at a metaphorical or impressionistic level, and has no other ambition than to point helpfully in the right general direction. Santayana, it is true, is firmly a mechanist: (“Any one who can at all catch the drift of experience — moral no less than physical — must feel that mechanism rules the whole world” (LR-A 412).); and we may surmise that he would have viewed with interest current cognitive science and neuroscientific attempts to provide mechanistic or computational models of mental capacities — but also with a reasonable dose of scepticism, given his belief that “mechanical processes are not like mathematical relations, because they happen” (LR-A 412). As a matter of fact, the most distinctive feature of Santayana’s philosophy of mind is that it tries to make room both for a staunch recognition of the universality of mechanism and for a vivid sense of the irreducibly *sui generis* character of felt experience. Whether it really manages to uphold equitably both requirements is a complex issue I cannot even begin to address here.

It is also hardly possible to give in a few lines a fair account of Santayana’s (in my opinion, often remarkably perceptive) grasp of Darwin’s theory of evolution and its importance for the philosophy of mind. Perhaps the following quotations will provide as much evidence as can be garnered in a short space:

It is clear that if the forces that hold an organism together are mechanical, and therefore independent of the ideal unities they subtend, those forces suffice to explain the origin of the organism, and can have produced it. Darwin’s discoveries, like every other advance in physical insight, are nothing but filling for that abstract assurance. They show us how the supposed mechanism really works in one particular field, in one stage of its elaboration. As earlier naturalists had shown us how mechanical causes might produce the miracle of the sunrise and the poetry of the seasons, so Darwin showed us how similar causes might secure the adaptation of animals to their habitat. Evolution, so conceived, is nothing but a detailed account of mechanical origins. (LR5 104)

The organs of spirit are structures; they are mechanisms instituted in nature to keep doing certain things, roughly appropriate to the environment, itself roughly constant. (SAF 282)

Darwinian evolution grounds Santayana’s moral individualism and relativism:

Spontaneous variations — of course mechanically caused — may occur and may modify the hereditary form of animals. These variations, superposed upon one another, may in time constitute a nature wholly unlike the first original. This accidental, cumulative evolution accordingly justifies a declaration of moral liberty. I am not obliged to aspire to the nature my father aspired to, for the ground of my being is partly new. In me nature is making a novel experiment. (SAF 107)

¹⁸ On this formalistic aspect of Valéry’s “system”, see Judith Robinson, *L’analyse de l’esprit dans les Cahiers de Valéry* (Paris: Librairie José Corti, 1963).

Santayana strikingly appeals to "optimality assumptions" in evolutionary explanations, in the manner of contemporary adaptationists.¹⁹

How should the psyche be ready and eager for a particular employment, if in her long evolution she had not been moulded to just that employment by a world which allowed and rewarded it? ... Certainly, her ideas are specious and her passions precipitate; yet for all their delusions and disarray, they have brought her forward, and she survives; so that things expected, hoped for, and worked for by any prospering animal, are, on the whole and with a difference, likely to happen. (RM 111)

Whereas Santayana's deep understanding of the general principles of Darwinian evolution allows him to muster its power and beauty in favor of his naturalism with regard to the mind, Valéry remains, oddly enough, unpersuaded. As late as 1945, he writes: "Theory of evolution: I have never been able to take it for anything but *imagery* — like creation and similar things. I have seen in it a purely inner formula for a purely psychic development with advantages and disadvantages. Nothing true" (CAHIERS XXIX, 442). One cannot avoid feeling that a Darwinian perspective would have clarified Valéry's thinking about the mind. His mistrust of Darwin, however, is only an instance of a wide-ranging and disturbing French intellectual phenomenon. In any case, as Daniel Dennett would say, if we forego the idea of evolution by natural selection we forego the only theory we have for explaining in a non-circular or non-regressive fashion the perceptual and behavioral capacities of human beings and other animals. Among philosophers, Santayana was one of the first to uphold (with characteristic subtlety and eloquence) this fundamental but still controversial conviction.

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¹⁹ Cf. Daniel Dennett, *The Intentional Stance* (Cambridge, Mass. and London: The MIT Press, 1987), Chapter 7.

Whither Santayana's Aesthetics?

Many who have little other knowledge of Santayana think of him as an elegant prose stylist with an artistic flair who wrote a book on aesthetics.¹ These remember him as the author of SB, *The Sense of Beauty*, whose naturalistic approach was influential in its day, and which for many years was a standard text in courses on art and aesthetics. Ironically, this was the earliest of some thirty books and (apart from *Reason in Art*, also an early work) he never returned to the topic of aesthetics. Indeed, he downplays the very notion of a philosophy of art, and does not accept it as a branch of his own philosophy. What becomes of it in his later writings? A short answer is easy — it was superseded by his much more sweeping account of the pure intuition of essence as a moment of spirit, an important concern of his later writings. On this large topic, the present note considers only the manner in which appreciation of art falls into the larger category of pure spirit.

Santayana says of SB that it is “uninspired” and “academic” (IW 11). It was written for the practical purpose of meeting his obligations as a professor. He explains how he came to lecture on aesthetics:

I was a kind of poet, I was alive to architecture and the other arts, I was at home in several languages: aesthetics might be regarded as my speciality. Very well: although I didn't have, and haven't now, a clear notion of what aesthetics may be, I undertook to give a course in that subject. (PP 393)

In his view, aesthetics — the appreciation of art — is just one instance of the “pure intuition of essence.”

But in philosophy I recognise no separate thing called aesthetics; and what has gone by the name of the philosophy of art, like the so-called philosophy of history, seems to me sheer verbiage. There is in art nothing but manual knack and professional tradition on the practical side, and on the contemplative side pure intuition of essence, with the inevitable intellectual or luxurious pleasure which pure intuition involves. (PGS 20)

His rejection of the conventional demarcation given to art is in harmony with some of his favourite doctrines. Religious myth should be seen as poetry, he says, and should not be taken as truth. Likewise, mathematics is not normally put in the category of art, even though it is a palmary instance of the pure intuition of essence. This ties in with Santayana's account of knowledge, which merges together into one realm categories which are usually taken to be separate — perceptions and intellectual understanding through concepts; for both the perceptions as felt and the concepts as understood are essences. They may characterize an object of animal faith, or they may be pure intuitions of essence. Thus an intellectual study like mathematics, although not normally included in the theory of art, is a creative achievement of pure

¹ Of course, these will likely know of his aphorism about remembering history. Since I am asked on a regular basis where this comes from, I give the citation and its source here:

Progress, far from consisting in change, depends on retentiveness. When change is absolute there remains no being to improve and no direction is set for possible improvement; and when experience is not retained, as among savages, infancy is perpetual. Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.

It comes on page 284 of Chapter 10, “Fluctuation and Constancy in Human Nature,” in *Reason in Common Sense*, which is the first of the five volumes of *The Life of Reason*, (New York: Scribner's, 1905-06). In the one-volume abbreviated version of all five (New York: Scribner's, 1953), it appears on page 82.

intuition, just as is art. In these and in other ways, the field of aesthetics merges into a study of the full range of possible intuitions of essence such as give joy to the spirit.

This radical enlargement of the philosophy of the creative arts extends even to ordinary perception; in a sense, Santayana elevates this into a form of art, and sees art at times as no more than a fresh mode of perception. A hint of Santayana's mature views on art can be found in "Penitent Art" (in OS) where he contrasts modern abstract art (cubism in particular) with the traditional. In doing so, he makes some of these comparisons between fine art and mundane perception. All agree that paintings fail as true representations of the world. But perception is in the same case; there is no perfect image, not in the mind, not in a painting, not in a photograph. One might consider perception as something of a creative miracle which bestows on us ways to interact with an alien world, in terms of essences entirely unlike the actual essences of the things perceived. The images we see, the sounds we hear, are all mental creations. Of the things themselves, it is too much to ask for a literal reproduction of the material complexity of whatever external thing is under scrutiny. Nor would this mass of uninterpreted information be of any value; only a biased symbolic representation permits a fruitful interaction with our external surroundings. The biased but informative intermediaries through which we perceive external things are essences originally culled up in somebody's experience, in some primitive inspired moment. The intuition of these essences becomes commonplace and they are passed over unnoticed by an agent. This is a precondition of intelligent action, but in the theory of empiricism the condition is not met, and the focus is on the intuition itself. Having recognized their inability to attain literal knowledge of external things, the empiricists take ideas as the objects of knowledge. They turn to the analysis of ideas (or, more recently, of sentences), and sever from their notion of knowledge the belief in the things themselves.

The situation is similar with art. Traditional Western art offers a beautiful setting for noble themes and idealized forms. As with ordinary perception, the medium of communication is passed over, while retaining the aesthetic affects. Such is not the case, however, with modern abstract art, which seeks to break down and analyse its medium, strictly disallowing any ulterior themes. Introspective modern art, like empiricism, retrenches and tries only to investigate intuition itself. Traditional ambitions are vigorously denounced. Santayana finds in cubism a pure deconstruction — a concern only with visual shapes and colours. It is *penitent*, despite its quite opposite self-image, since it renounces so much. It displays a "lenten mood."

Artists find novel ways of seeing things, ways which may be aesthetically pleasing, or revelatory of particular emotions, or lead to some new ideal. On occasion, these innovations may be incorporated into ordinary perception of things. The original vision of the artist initiates, albeit with special skill and depth, the same kind of spiritual moment found in the most rudimentary and commonplace observations.

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The Santayana Edition

The Santayana Edition is now in place at Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI). I became the Dean of the School of Liberal Arts in August 1998, but because of the edition's work schedule, the project did not move until one year later. Kris Frost, Associate Editor, has joined me at IUPUI, and we have appointed a new Editor for the edition. While I remain General Editor, Marianne Wokeck has agreed to serve as Editor. She has the expertise and scholarship for this task, and I believe it best to let her introduce herself:

My background, somewhat like George Santayana's, is bi-cultural. I grew up in Göttingen, Germany (you may recall it from Santayana's illustration accompanying his "Psalm of Travel"), and studied at the universities of Hamburg and Freiburg (majoring in English and History). My Americanization began in Philadelphia as a Fulbright graduate exchange student at Temple University. I completed my degree there with a dissertation in early American history and, because I was married by then, rejected the life of an academic gypsy in an extremely tight academic market in favor of starting on an alternative career path. Richard S. Dunn (University of Pennsylvania) and Mary Maples Dunn (first Bryn Mawr, then Smith College) offered me an associate editorship at the Penn Papers and within a year I advanced from most junior member of the project team to the most senior editor. Upon successful completion of the four-volume select letter press series of *The Papers of William Penn* (University of Pennsylvania Press), I initiated and directed the Biographical Dictionary of Early Pennsylvania Legislators project — a prosopographical study funded by the NEH and the Pennsylvania Assembly. After publication of the first volume of *Lawmaking and Legislators in Pennsylvania* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991). I left the project in the hands of my colleagues to pursue my interest in teaching at IUPUI. That the Biographical Dictionary project is still going strong, with volume three covering the revolutionary and early national periods about to be published, validates my vision and its implementation and is testimony to the endeavor's significance. What I learned from my involvement with the Penn Papers and the Biographical Dictionary projects are the skills of documentary and managing editors in an environment of scholarly teamwork and under the pressures of uncertainty that stem from "soft-money" funding. Although I have not exercised those skills much lately, I am convinced that I can refresh and update them to make a contribution to the Santayana Edition. In doing so efficiently and speedily, I trust I can count on you to help and teach me.

We are all excited about the new arrangements and location; IUPUI provides a more stable setting for the edition, giving both Kris Frost and Marianne Wokeck positions and support.

On another note, NEH did not fund our proposal for 1999-2001. However, with the clear leadership of Marianne Wokeck, we completed a new proposal that was submitted in September 1999 for 2000-2002, and we hope to have better fortune now that the project is in place. It is worth noting that *The Works of George Santayana* joins two other distinguished editions at IUPUI: The Peirce Project and The Papers of Frederick Douglass.

HERMAN J. SAATKAMP JR.
General Editor, Santayana Edition

Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL CHECKLIST

FIFTEENTH UPDATE

The items below will supplement the references given in *George Santayana: A Bibliographical Checklist, 1880-1980* (Bowling Green: Philosophy Documentation Center, 1982) prepared by Herman J. Saatkamp Jr., and John Jones. These references are divided into primary and secondary sources. Except for the book reviews, the following articles and books are classified according to their years of publication. Readers with additions or corrections are invited to send these to Herman J. Saatkamp Jr., Santayana Edition, School of Liberal Arts, IUPUI, Indianapolis IN 46202-5140.

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